

HELMORE AND COTTERILL  
THE FORMATIVE YEARS

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## ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is to examine the works of the important Christchurch architectural partnership of Heathcote George Helmore (1894-1965) and Henry Guy Cotterill (1897-1981). The study begins in 1894, the year of Helmore's birth, and finishes in 1940. This period is of great significance as it provides many answers about Helmore and Cotterill's training, the nature of their partnership, their activity abroad, and their attitudes towards architectural styles. The period is also notable for the quality of work produced. Some of Helmore and Cotterill's most famous buildings were executed in the 1920s and 30s. Although they are primarily remembered as designers of stately homes who worked for a small but wealthy group of clients, they had a very liberal attitude towards questions of style. In addition to such traditional approaches as English Neo-Georgian, American Colonial Revival, and French Colonial, the two architects also incorporated Spanish Mission and the Modern Movement into their repertoire. The partners were often in the forefront of New Zealand architecture when it came to introducing new methods of building design.

The thesis is divided into three chapters. The first concentrates on the architects' upbringing and discusses the close parallels in their education. A great deal of attention is devoted to their stay in England during the early 1920s as it forms an important phase of their development. Helmore's correspondence with his family in New Zealand sheds new light on his association with the famous English architect, Sir Edwin Lutyens. The second chapter centres on Helmore and Cotterill's return to New Zealand and the establishment of their practice in Christchurch during the 1920s. A prominent feature of this period is their use of American Colonial motifs. They were the first New Zealand architects to promote a form of timber building which drew heavily on eighteenth-century American domestic designs. The final chapter emphasizes the versatility of Helmore and Cotterill's approach and their ability to overcome the uncertainties of the economic depression. The architects and their buildings are placed within the broad context of New Zealand architecture. Comparisons are made between them and their contemporaries, both in New Zealand, Europe, and the United States. Helmore and Cotterill emerge as an architectural firm whose work rank among the best produced during this period in New Zealand and their approach to design is one that is characteristic of this transitional phase of twentieth-century architecture.

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## PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the 1960s, when Modernism was at its peak, a study of Helmore and Cotterill would have seemed inappropriate. Although they had managed to develop a very successful partnership and built numerous houses throughout Canterbury and parts of North Island, the pair did not fit easily into the current trend of building. Their strong classical background, coupled with their deep admiration for "the tradition of English culture," were at odds with the Modern Movement which attempted to sweep away many orthodox precepts about architecture.<sup>1</sup> This is not to say that the partners were despised by members of their profession and held up as examples of what not should be done. Paul Pascoe, a leading exponent of Modernism in New Zealand during the post-war period, acknowledged Helmore's "great influence." He qualified the claim, though, by saying that Helmore's influence was "of the intangible kind. The stream of architectural history is for ever flowing and we need to be aware of the best of preceding influences. If architects uphold their moment in time, then they will hand on to the next moment a better achievement."<sup>2</sup>

To some extent, Helmore and Cotterill were placed in a similar position to Sir Edwin Lutyens (1869-1944). The latter, who had employed Helmore as an assistant between 1921 and 1922, was considered by many of his contemporaries to be the most important English architect since Sir Christopher Wren (1632-1723). This view did not remain unchallenged. Towards the end of his career and after his death a number of critics began to reassess this attitude. In 1943 a review of Robert Lutyens's biography of his father appeared in *The Architects Journal*. As with Pascoe's *aperçu* of Helmore, it placed him firmly within an earlier and somewhat outdated tradition of building. "With our minds and our efforts fixed upon realities, both material and cultural, we must, for

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1. See "Obituary: Heathcote Gorge Helmore (F)," *Journal of the New Zealand Institute of Architects*, XXXII, August 1965, p.269.

2. *Ibid.*

the sake of the future, appreciate the great function fulfilled by Sir Edwin Lutyens. His work provided a catharsis - a complete fulfilment of the dreams of a whole generation of architects, whose last creative days ended abruptly and for ever in September 1939. Lutyens has summed up the best of the old world for us and has thus left us unrepressed by frustrated desires, free to concentrate on building the new."<sup>3</sup> By 1969 his reputation had deteriorated to such an extent (at least among British critics), that the arch-modernist Peter Smithson was led to say: "Trying to think about Lutyens is like trying to think about the younger Saarinen: enviable talent, but historically speaking distressingly unhelpful. Lutyens was caught in the box of his time to tightly for it to be possible for my generation to think about his work without pain... ."<sup>4</sup>

Today the validity of such arguments is being increasingly questioned. For many people, the Modern Movement has failed to live up to its original expectations. Instead of creating a utopian world, it has engendered a whole new set of problems for architects, town planners, and interior designers. In the process Lutyens's former reputation has been revived and architects like Helmore and Cotterill are beginning to be seen in a more positive light.

Given the growth of interest in Lutyens's work, it now seems opportune to embark on a detailed study of Helmore and Cotterill's work. Because it is beyond the scope of this enquiry to focus on all their output, attention will be limited to the work they did prior to the Second World War. In many ways this is the most fascinating period of their careers. Most of their finest work was executed between 1924 and 1940. Of interest also is their early training in New Zealand, the impact of the First World War on their development, their sojourn in England, and the effect of the 1930s economic depression.

The majority of Helmore and Cotterill's drawings are held in the Canterbury Museum, Christchurch. The collection is unusual if not unique in New Zealand for it

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3. See G. Stamp, "The Rise and Fall and Rise of Edwin Lutyens," *Architectural Review*, CLXX, November 1981, p.311.

4. *Ibid.*, p.316.

spans the entire *oeuvre* of two architects. Over 1760 plans, sketches, and measured drawings are listed in the museum inventory. Study of their work has also benefited by the recent discovery of a group of letters written by Helmore to his family in New Zealand. At present, they belong to Mrs. Susan Smith, a niece of the architect, and provide the most detailed account we have of the architect's movements, his views on architecture, and his dealings with Lutyens.

Because of the limitations of the reproductive process, some of the illustrations are not as clear as would be ideal. This is particularly evident in the photographs taken from the plans in the Helmore and Cotterill collection. For a more precise guide, the reader is advised to consult the original drawings in the Canterbury Museum. Their exact location is provided in the list of illustrations which contain the catalogue numbers supplied by the late John Hendry and the Canterbury Museum's own reference numbers. A cross-reference is also provided in Appendix A.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE FORMATION OF A PARTNERSHIP

Heathcote Helmore and Guy Cotterill, two Christchurch architects renowned for designing large and stately homes, were partners in practice for more than forty years. The date which marks the formation of the partnership is usually held to be 1924.<sup>1</sup> The association lasted until Helmore's death on 21 May 1965.<sup>2</sup> A detailed analysis of the early years of their training, however, reveals that the two architects worked together for a much longer period of time. Both went to the same school, both studied under the same teachers, and both had similar family backgrounds. In mid-1920 the two architects left New Zealand and embarked on a study tour of England. By the time they returned to Christchurch, approximately three years later, the foundations for a successful partnership had already been laid.

The purpose of this chapter is to highlight the parallels between the upbringing of the two architects and draw attention to the work they did in England prior to the formalization of the partnership in 1924. By separately examining the architects' early education, a clearer picture of their relationship begins to emerge. Of particular interest will be Helmore and Cotterill's trip to England and their involvement with such firms as Lanchester, Rickards, and Lucas; Ashley and Newman; and the famous English architect of his generation, Sir Edwin Lutyens. This period is crucial to an understanding of Helmore and Cotterill's partnership for it was to exert a great influence on their outlook and development.

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1. See "Contributors: H.G. Helmore and H.G. Cotterill," *Home and Building*, X, June-July 1944, p.9.

2. Cotterill continued to practise, though at a much reduced pace. He died on 10 September 1981.

Helmore, the eldest child of George Henry Noble Helmore and Janet Maud (née Gray), was born in Rangiora, North Canterbury on 1 May 1894. On 6 June he was baptized Heathcote George at the Anglican church of St. John's, Rangiora.<sup>3</sup> Three more children followed; Ella Maud (1895), Ernest Creswell (1896), and Kathleen Margaret (c.1905). Helmore's father, George, practised as a barrister and solicitor. In 1906 the family moved to Christchurch where he entered into partnership with Henry C.D. van Asch.<sup>4</sup> Their house was located at Millbrook, an area of land contiguous with Holmwood Road and Helmore's Lane (Fig.1). For Helmore, the place had special significance. As a student in England during the early 1920s he was eager to procure any news about the site. It was at Millbrook that he spent most of his adolescence, where his family had entertained the Governor of New Zealand, and where he built his own house.

In the same year that the family left Rangiora, Helmore was admitted as a student to Christ's College, Christchurch.<sup>5</sup> His father had also been a pupil and no doubt expected him, as he had done, to take a keen interest in learning and outdoor sports. Although the documentation is sparse, there seems every likelihood that he enjoyed his stay at the college. Information garnered from later years reveals that he viewed his seven years at the school with a certain amount of nostalgia. Indeed, while working as an architectural draughtsman in London he found enough time to organise an old boys' reunion.<sup>6</sup>

Due to the paucity of primary sources, it is difficult to identify those factors which may have influenced Helmore's decision to take up a career as an architect. Perhaps he made a close study of the buildings that occupied the land around the quadrangle at Christ's College. Many of Christchurch's most important architects had

3. See Church Registers, Canterbury Public Library, Christchurch.

4. "The Late Mr G.H.N. Helmore," *Press*. 3 July 1922, p.7.

5. *The School List of Christ's College: From 1850 to 1965*. Christchurch, 1966, p.154.

6. See Helmore's letter to his mother, 12 July [1921]. Unless otherwise stated, all letters written by Helmore come from the collection of Mr. and Mrs. Lindsay Smith, Hastings.

contributed to the layout in one form or another. Robert Speechly, who was brought out from England to supervise the construction of Christchurch Cathedral, was largely responsible for the school's chapel (1867). Thomas W. Cane (1830-1905), the last Provincial Architect to be appointed by the Canterbury Provincial Government, drew up the plans for Condell House (1878). James E. Fitzgerald, though not an architect by profession, had built Big School in 1863. Similarly, Helmore may have undertaken an examination of the Canterbury Museum (1870-76), a Gothic Revival building located next to the college. As is the case with the Great Hall (1882) of the former University of Canterbury, it was designed by Benjamin W. Mountfort (1825-98), the city's foremost architect during the second half of the nineteenth-century. In the same precinct lay Christchurch Boys' High School (1879), by W.B. Armson (1834-83), and the former Girls' High School (1878), by Cane. According to Samuel Hurst Seager, who wrote an article in 1900 for the *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects* entitled "Architectural Art in New Zealand," such a noteworthy assemblage "could not...be found in any other town of the same number of inhabitants."<sup>7</sup> In view of Helmore's strong regard for historical precedent, it is logical to assume that this group of buildings played a key role in shaping his attitude towards architecture.

Of equal significance, perhaps, was the New Zealand International Exhibition (Fig.2). Held at Hagley Park, Christchurch, between 1906 and 1907, it was intended to highlight recent technological and cultural developments. The majority of the exhibition buildings were designed by Joseph C. Maddison (1850-1923), a Christchurch architect who is best known for his High Renaissance palazzo design of the Government Buildings (1909-11) in Cathedral Square. In keeping with the diverse spread of exhibits, a wide range of stylistic motifs were employed. The main facade, for instance, is characterised by a mixture of classical and oriental motifs. Helmore may have also known about the architecture section of the British stand. Among the photographs and drawings were works by Reginald Blomfield (1856-1942), Thomas

7. S.H. Seager, "Architectural Art in New Zealand," *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects*. VII, 1900, pp.484-486.



Geoffrey Lucas (1872-1947), Edwin L. Lutyens (1869-1944), Charles F.A. Voysey (1857-1941), and Edgar Wood (1860-1935).<sup>8</sup> It is not too far fetched to presume that Helmore inspected these displays as the exhibition was held only a few hundred metres away from Christ's College.

After finishing his education at Christ's College in 1912, Helmore was articled to Cecil Walter Wood (1878-1947), a former student of the school. The choice was significant for Wood had spent five years (1901-06) in England working under the London County Council, Robert Weir Schultz (1861-1951), and Leonard Stokes (1858-1925). On his return he became Seager's junior partner. The association did not last very long and in 1907 he set up his own office.<sup>9</sup> By the time Helmore joined the practice, Wood was starting to establish a name for himself. In 1912 he was commissioned by H.A. Knight to build a grand country house at Racecourse Hill, Mid-Canterbury.<sup>10</sup> In comparison with other large houses, notably Mona Vale (1900), the one at Racecourse Hill is plainer and more severe. Half-timbering on the walls has been replaced by a plain roughcast surface. The chimneys are less ornate and the decorative brickwork has largely been omitted. There is evidence that Helmore took special note of Wood's work. In 1922, while working as an assistant in Sir Edwin Lutyens's office, London, he wrote to his mother and requested that she deliver "a little green photo book with photographs of Cecil Woods houses in it."<sup>11</sup> Presumably this volume contained pictures of Racecourse Hill. The strong horizontal effect of the building may have had an effect on Helmore as many of his own country houses exhibit similar qualities.

8. See I. Spielmann, *The British Government Exhibit at the New Zealand International Exhibition, (1906-1907)*. London, 1908, pp.224-243.

9. "An Appreciation of the Work of the Late Cecil W. Wood, F.N.Z.I.A., A.R.I.B.A.," *Home and Building*, X, April-May 1948, p.13. See also Cattell, p.92.

10. For a detailed discussion of this building see J.W.F. Cattell, *Domestic Architecture in Christchurch and Districts, 1850-1938*. M.A. Thesis. University of Auckland, 1981, pp.93-104.

11. Helmore, letter to his mother. 9 January [1922]. The book is no longer extant.

Of great interest is a pen and wash drawing of a pair of country shops by the young Helmore. It is dated 1914 and bears the inscription "2nd term" (Fig.3). In all likelihood, he did not make the drawing at Wood's office. Between 1913 and 1915 he also attended evening classes at the Canterbury College School of Art.<sup>12</sup> The drawing is probably a remnant of a project that Helmore completed at the College. On the left hand side of the study three differing views of the structure are presented; an elevation of the side gable, a section of the interior, and a section of the wall. Located on the upper right portion of the page is the front elevation of the porch. Below it, depicted in a much reduced scale, is a plan of the drainage system. Apart from showing the types of work Helmore undertook at this time, the study reveals that Wood continued to exert a strong influence. Features like the roughcast surface, the brick walls of the ground floor, and the low pitch of the gable, recall Racecourse Hill. In keeping with much of Wood's work, Helmore uses half-timbering sparingly.

Under Wood, Helmore is likely to have gained a thorough familiarity with the English Domestic Revival of the late nineteenth-century. Naturally, he would have been very acquainted with the buildings of Schultz and Stokes as his teacher had first-hand knowledge of their work. Wood may have discussed, for instance, Schultz's use of the butterfly plan at How Green House (1904-05) or the vernacular style of building employed by Stokes at Littleshaw, Woldingham (1902-04).<sup>13</sup> In all probability, Wood's accounts of his stay in England aroused Helmore's interest and convinced him of the need to visit that country and study its architecture.

During this period Helmore began to make contacts with other architects in Christchurch. On 18 February, 1915 he attended a meeting of the Canterbury Branch of

12. See *The Register of Evening Students, 1896-1913*, and *The Register of Evening Students, 1913-1917*. School of Fine Arts Office, University of Canterbury, Christchurch. Helmore's academic report was very good. During this period he received "Pass Excellent" in "Architectural Design," "Free Drawing," and "Perspective Architecture." See *The Register of Scholarships and Prizes, Examinations, 1887-1927*. School of Fine Arts Office, University of Canterbury, Christchurch.

13. For an examination of these buildings see G. Stamp and A. Goulancourt, *The English House, 1860-1914: The Flowering of English Architecture*. London, 1986, pp.116-117, 152-153.

the New Zealand Institute of Architects. It was held at the A.M.P. buildings and was chaired by Seager. Other members present were W.A.P. Clarkson (1863-1917), M.J. Guthrie, B.J. Ager (-1960), G.T. Lucas (1890-1972), and G.A.J. Hart (1879-1961).<sup>14</sup> Accompanying Helmore was another student, Leonard D. Bestall. Due to their subordinate status, the two were listed separately in the minute book as visitors. Helmore probably went along on his own volition as there is no record of Wood attending the gathering. The purpose of the visit was to secure a room where architectural students could meet and form a union. Seager believed that the room ought to foster dialogue between the novices and the architects.<sup>15</sup> What effect these meetings had on the students is not altogether clear. By conversing with other architects they may have bettered their understanding of various technical issues. Two weeks after the meeting at the A.M.P. buildings, for example, a discussion on *Excavations and Foundations* was held.<sup>16</sup>

Helmore's involvement with the Institute, however, was suspended a few months later. In 1915 he became Aide-de-Camp to the Governor of New Zealand, Arthur William de Brito Savile, the fifth Earl of Liverpool (1870-1941). The rank accorded to the architect was honorary lieutenant.<sup>17</sup> Because the position was, for the most part, full-time, he would have had little chance of completing his articles before the end of the First World War. Documentation uncovered in various repositories reinforces this view. Located in the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, is the official diary of the 28th Governor of New Zealand. It is dated 1916 and written by Helmore. According to its contents, the architect was at Lord Liverpool's side nearly every day of the year. Another source which sheds light on the matter is the recorded minutes of the Canterbury Branch of the New Zealand Institute of Architects. On 7

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14. *Minutes*. 18 February 1915. Canterbury Branch of the N.Z.I.A., Christchurch. I am indebted to Spencer Meikle for allowing me to examine these archives.

15. *Ibid.*

16. *Ibid.*

17. See *The New Zealand Official Year-Book, 1915*. London, 1915, p.23.

July 1918 Helmore's application for membership was unanimously passed.<sup>18</sup> There is evidence, however, that a debate took place. One of the paragraphs contained in the July minutes is crossed out. Although similar in content to the one which records the acceptance of the architect's application, it contains an important qualification. It resolved:

that the application by Mr. Heathcote Helmore for membership of the Branch have the approval of this Branch, provided the unexpired term of his articles be completed, the Secretary was therefore instructed to hand Mr. Helmore a letter to that effect.<sup>19</sup>

The N.Z.I.A. in Wellington voiced similar concerns. Written in faint pencil below his name in a Members' Ledger is the comment, "membership incomplete awaiting conclusion of articles of apprenticeship."<sup>20</sup>

It is important to remember that Helmore's appointment as an Aide-de-Camp to the Governor of New Zealand was not the sole cause for the disruption of his studies. The outbreak of war in 1914 is likely to have disrupted his studies at the Canterbury College School of Art and at Wood's office. At the time, he may have thought it prudent to take a temporary position, such as that of an Aide-de-Camp, and then return to his studies once the situation had become more clear. Indeed, he appears to have resumed evening classes at the School of Art towards the end of the war because in 1918 he was awarded the Architectural Scholarship.<sup>21</sup> Presumably he went back to Cecil Wood at the same time. On 22 April 1920 he was placed on the Register of Members.<sup>22</sup>

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18. *Minutes*, 7 July 1918, Canterbury Branch of the N.Z.I.A.

19. *Ibid.*

20. *New Zealand Institute of Architects Members' Ledger, 1915-20*. Records of the N.Z.I.A., J.C. Beaglehole Room, University of Victoria, Wellington, p.420.

21. See *The Register of Scholarships and Prizes, Examinations, 1887-1927*.

22. *Ibid.*

The four years that Helmore spent as an Aide-de-Camp had an important bearing on the development of his architectural career. Many of the people he encountered during this period were to become clients. On 29 January 1916, for instance, the architect and the Governor stayed with Mr and Mrs Algar Williams. Algar Temple Williams, a prominent Christchurch sharebroker, commissioned the architect to design a house at 35 Wairarapa Terrace in 1926. Similarly, Major G.F. Hutton, who attended a dinner at "Te Koraha" with the viceregal party on 20 December 1916, charged Helmore to prepare the plans for a house at 125 Deans Avenue, Christchurch (1925). Another notable acquaintance was J.H. Grigg. He lived in South Canterbury at "Longbeach" station. When the family homestead burned down in 1937 he commissioned the architect to design a replacement.

Our attention now shifts to Henry Guy Cotterill. He was born on 19 August 1897 in Christchurch and baptized at St. Barnabas' Anglican Church on 15 September. His parents, Henry and Adela Frances (née Ronalds), had two other children; Lionel Denis in 1894 and Betty Dorothea in 1901.<sup>23</sup> The family's residence, which lay in Bryndwr Road, Bryndwr, was in close proximity to Millbrook. In many ways, Cotterill's family background mirrored that of Helmore. His father was a solicitor who ran a successful law firm. Known as Duncan, Cotterill, and Company, it had a reputation for managing some of New Zealand's most important estates.<sup>24</sup> Like George Helmore, Cotterill senior represented Canterbury in cricket and rugby. Furthermore, both men had been pupils of Christ's College. During their professional careers they maintained a close interest in the running of the school. The former was President of the Old Boys' Association in 1911.<sup>25</sup> The latter, in addition to being a member of the Board of Governors, was chairman of the Finance Committee for twenty five years.<sup>26</sup> The two

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23. Church Registers, Canterbury Public Library, Christchurch.

24. See "In the Public Eye: To-day's Personality, Mr Henry Cotterill," *Christchurch Times*, 15 March 1935, p.10.

25. "The Late Mr G.H.N. Helmore," *Press*, 3 July 1922, p.7.

26. "In the Public Eye."

were also staunch supporters of the Church of England. Plainly there must have been many opportunities for their sons to have known each other at an early age.

In his eleventh year Cotterill entered Christ's College. Unlike Helmore, he stayed there for only a few terms.<sup>27</sup> The probable cause for his absence is polio. In his youth he is known to have suffered from the disease. According to his wife, Mrs. Audrey Cotterill, it paralysed the upper portion of his right shoulder and parts of his chest.<sup>28</sup> His condition, though, was manageable and in later life he seems to have experienced few problems in wielding drawing instruments. The quest for more information about Cotterill's schooling has proved relatively futile. In all likelihood, his parents isolated him from other people and had him educated privately at home.

By early 1915 Cotterill had overcome the hindrance which disrupted his secondary education. According to the minutes of the N.Z.I.A., he was articled to Wood in February. It is probable that his parents persuaded him to join the office. Wood would have known Cotterill's father as the latter sat on various committees empowered to administer the school's building programme. As Chairman of the Finance Committee, Cotterill senior may have discussed with the architect the specifications and cost of Hare Memorial Library (1915). It is probably through such contacts that Cotterill was able to join Wood's office. It should also not be forgotten that Wood was one of the foremost architects operating in Christchurch at this time. The only other architect who had a similar reputation was Seager. Cotterill's parents no doubt viewed Cecil Wood's office as an ideal place for their son to embark on an architectural career.

Cotterill's tenure with Wood, however, was cut short by the war. Sometime after 1915 his teacher joined the New Zealand army.<sup>29</sup> Because Cotterill had only been articled for two years, it was necessary for him to approach another architect. To ensure

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27. See *The School List of Christ's College: From 1850 to 1965*. p.160.

28. Mrs. Audrey Cotterill, conversation with the author. 22 May 1988.

29. The exact date of Wood's enlistment is still unclear. The fact that the New Zealand Institute of Architects' Education Committee discussed Cotterill's situation on 29 March 1917, suggests that Wood did not join the army until late 1916 or early 1917. See *Minutes of the Council of the New Zealand Institute of Architects*. 29 March 1917. Records of the N.Z.I.A., J.C. Beaglehole Room, University of Victoria, Wellington.

that the transfer was legal, Wood contacted the N.Z.I.A. The gravity of the situation is underscored by the prominent reference accorded to it in the *Minutes*.

The Education Committee reported the case of Mr H.G. Cotterill, a pupil of Mr C.H.[W] Wood, Christchurch. Mr Wood desired to have Mr. Cotterill registered as an articled pupil and student as from the date he commenced his articles, viz: 1st February 1915 and, because of the enlistment for Active service of Mr. Wood, to have the articles transferred to Mr. Hurst Seager. The Education Committee had gone carefully into this case and had recommended the Executive Committee to grant the request and this had been done. The action of these Committees was submitted for confirmation.<sup>30</sup>

The resolution was supported by the President and on 29 March 1917 it was ratified.

The period with Seager seems to have been relatively uneventful. Only two buildings are known to have been designed by the architect in 1917; a house in Hackthorne Road, Christchurch, and St. Mary the Virgin Anglican church at Culverden.<sup>31</sup> The latter is clad in vertical board and batten, and roofed in corrugated iron (Fig.4). In many respects, it harks back to the Gothic Revival churches built in and around Christchurch during the second half of the nineteenth century. The roof, which is capped by a bellcote, is steeply pitched. The windows of the west end are pointed. By the time Cotterill left Seager's office, therefore, he must have been well versed in the traditional forms of construction.

Another source of learning for Cotterill was the Canterbury College School of Art. Like Helmore, he attended classes in the evening.<sup>32</sup> His academic record also appears to have been very good. In 1915, for example, he received a first class pass in "Principles of Planning."<sup>33</sup> Three years later he shared the "Canterbury branch of the

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30. *Ibid.*

31. There may have been more but they are not to be found in the list of tenders published in the *Press* for that year. See *Press*, 19 June 1917, p.9 and 17 October 1917, p.11. I am indebted to Pam Wilson for drawing these buildings to my attention.

32. *The Register of Evening Students, 1913-1917.*

33. See *The Register of Scholarships and Prizes, Examinations, 1887-1927.*



Institute of Architects" prize with Helmore.<sup>34</sup> The fact that he was placed first equal suggests that he had managed to catch up with his much older colleague and was capable of absorbing the same types of lessons.

Against this background, it is apparent that the nature of the training received by Helmore and Cotterill was very close. Indeed, there seems every possibility that the two knew each other well before their departure for England in 1920. Helmore, for instance, may have met Cotterill at Christ's College in 1908. Contact may have also occurred in Cecil Wood's office. At the time Helmore was preparing to leave and work as an Aide-de-Camp for the Governor of New Zealand, Cotterill was accepted by Wood as an articled student. It is conceivable, therefore, that the two students worked together for a number of months in his office. Moreover, at the Canterbury College School of Art they would have had opportunity of seeing each other in the evenings. Another point worth noting is that the families of both men almost certainly went to the same social gatherings. Because their fathers were lawyers and social life in a small city like Christchurch at the turn of the century was close-knit, it is reasonable to assume that many opportunities existed for the two architects to meet. Their experiences were so alike that the path to partnership seems to have been set at an early stage.

In 1920 Helmore and Cotterill had reached a crucial point in their careers. Although they had received a solid amount of training and were members of the N.Z.I.A., they decided not to open an office in Christchurch for another few years. Influenced, perhaps, by Wood and Seager, they resolved instead to embark on a journey to England. Their aim, it seems, was to observe how other architects worked and gain more experience.

Until recently, very little was known about Helmore and Cotterill's stay in Europe during the early 1920s. To be sure, they are believed to have spent most of their time in London. Cotterill is recorded as working for Ashley and Newman while

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34. *Ibid.*

Helmore is believed to have studied under Sir Edwin Lutyens. Both worked in the office of Lanchester, Rickards, and Lucas.<sup>35</sup> A number of questions, however, remain. Did they journey to England together? Did they pass through the office of Lanchester, Rickards, and Lucas at the same time? Who exerted the most influence on the two architects? Did Cotterill, as his obituary notice in the *Press* seems to imply, also work in the office of Sir Edwin Lutyens?<sup>36</sup> When did Helmore and Cotterill arrive and when did they leave?

Many of the answers to these questions are to be found in a group of letters written by Helmore to his family in New Zealand. The correspondence begins in August 1920 and terminates in January 1922. Besides supplying a detailed account of Helmore and Cotterill's progress in England and the Continent, the letters contain a wealth of material relating to social, economic, and political matters.

In the middle of 1920 both Helmore and Cotterill, along with Lord Liverpool and his wife, set off for England on *R.M.S. Ionic*. On August 6 they reached the east coast of North America. Once the ship had berthed at Newport, Rhode Island, Helmore and Cotterill joined four other tourists and caught a train to New York. Both men stayed at the Biltmore Hotel, a 21 story building which had recently been erected. The imposing New York skyline had an immediate impact on the two architects. "The famous Woolworth Building," Helmore wrote, is "over 750 feet high and 60 stories. One sees the whole of New York from the top. It is a marvellous feat of engineering and sways so much that people get very sea-sick in the offices on the upper stories." A quality which seemed to impress him the most was the simplicity of the many tall buildings. The Biltmore, he found, was a "very good example" of what he meant (Fig.5).<sup>37</sup>

Two days later Helmore and Cotterill returned to their ocean liner. On discovering that it would not be leaving for another day they joined up with Lord

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35. "Contributors: H.G. Helmore and H.G. Cotterill."

36. *Press*, 11 September 1981, p.10.

37. Helmore, letter to his sister, Ella. 11 August 1920.

Liverpool and another party and proceeded by car to Yorktown in Virginia. Yorktown, the site where Lord Cornwallis surrendered to George Washington in 1781, contained a number of buildings dating from the colonial era. Among the monuments which caught Helmore's attention were "some fascinating old English Queen houses."<sup>38</sup>

The *Ionic* arrived at Southampton towards the end of August. By early September they were living at St. George's Hotel in London. At this stage neither man had arranged entry into an architectural firm. In a letter, dated 5 September, Helmore states that he and Cotterill hope to see a "Mr Troup" the next day.<sup>39</sup> In all likelihood he is referring to Francis William Troup (1859-1941), an architect closely linked with the arts and crafts movement. Helmore may have heard about him from Wood who once worked in Robert Weir Schultz's office. Troup and Weir Schultz were good friends and had collaborated together on a number of projects, notably in the design of the health resort at Canford Cliffs, Dorset, for the Holloway Sanatorium, Egham, Surrey (1910-12).<sup>40</sup> Helmore also mentions that he had been given letters (presumably letters of introduction) to "several other architects from different people."<sup>41</sup> Unfortunately the identity of these figures is not recorded.

By mid September the two men had moved out of their hotel and shifted to a flat at 9 Charles St. near St. James' Square. The change coincided with their appointment as assistants to Lanchester, Rickards, and Lucas. Although the positions were unpaid both architects were cheerful about the prospect of working in the office.

Mr Lucas has agreed to take both Guy and I into his office  
and we start work in a fortnights time. I am awfully pleased  
as it is just the sort of work I like and some of these big

38. *Ibid.* In later years Helmore and Cotterill were to show a deep interest in the colonial architecture of Virginia. In all probability they went there again. What appears to be a chance encounter turns out to be of great significance. For a discussion of the impact of such buildings see Chapter II.

39. H.G. Helmore, letter to his mother, 5 September [1920].

40. A. Stuart Gray, *Edwardian Architecture: A Biographical Dictionary*. London, 1985, p.357.

41. *Ibid.*

London City schemes will be most interesting. It is practically the only domestic work being done in England at present and involves some quite decent sized houses as well as blocks of flats, shops, and commercial building in a small scale.<sup>42</sup>

The office was located at 19 Bedford Square, not far from the Architectural Association.<sup>43</sup> Henry Vaughan Lanchester (1863-1953), the senior partner, usually spent half of the year working in India. At the time Helmore and Cotterill joined the firm he was still residing in England. By and large he acted as the firm's manager, providing much of the business acumen needed to manage a large architectural practice. He also concerned himself with the planning and engineering aspects of building design.<sup>44</sup> The other partner, Edwin Rickards (1872-1920), died a few days after the two architects were taken on. This was a serious blow for he was regarded by many as being one of the most imaginative interpreters of the Edwardian Baroque movement. Much of the firm's success in winning competitions between 1897 and 1906, when it was known as Lanchester, Stewart, and Rickards, can be attributed to his adept draughtsmanship and handling of scale and proportion. Helmore, in a letter to his father on 11 October 1920, described him as "a very brilliant man and a great artist."<sup>45</sup> The third partner, Thomas Geoffrey Lucas (1872-1947), was a newcomer to the office, having joined it only in 1919. Before that he had established a reputation for himself as a designer of houses and cottages. Examples of his work are to be found at Hampstead Garden Suburb (Lucas Square is named after him) and at Ponders End and Broxbourne.<sup>46</sup> When Helmore and

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42. Helmore, letter to his father. 12 September [1920].

43. In his letter of 12 September [1920], Helmore refers to it as the "Architectural Institute." In view of his later involvement with the Architectural Association, he almost certainly means the Architectural Association.

44. There seems to be a connection between Lanchester and New Zealand. According to Helmore, Lanchester had a brother living in Tauranga. See Helmore's letter to his father, 11 October 1920.

45. *Ibid.*

46. "Obituaries: Thomas Geoffrey Lucas [F]," *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, LV, November 1947, p.39.

Cotterill joined he was working on two more Garden City projects, one at Portsmouth and the other at Weybridge. Both schemes were very large in conception. The Portsmouth proposal, for instance, required that he prepare plans and designs for over 1000 houses. For Helmore and Cotterill, still fresh from their experiences as articulated students in New Zealand, such a project must have made a big impression.

Helmore's observations of the firm's organisation and work practice have also been recorded. Each workday began at 10 a.m. and did not finish until 6 p.m. One hour was normally set aside for lunch and could be taken any time between 12 and 3 o'clock in the afternoon.<sup>47</sup> Despite the harsh economic climate, the office was amply staffed. Two young architects were employed as draughtsmen. In addition to the secretary and a "tracer," there was also a student. According to Helmore, "they are all awfully nice and easy to get on with and in fact the whole crowd seem just like a happy family."<sup>48</sup> Of the two partners, Lucas came in for special mention. Though Helmore liked him very much, he tempered his remarks by saying that "he is rather easy going." On one occasion, in about mid November, he closed the office up and invited the workers out to tea.<sup>49</sup>

Much of the work Helmore and Cotterill did at this time related to the Garden City schemes. Sometimes they were allowed to leave the office and inspect the prospective sites. At Weybridge, for example, they measured parts of the infrastructure and examined aspects of the drainage system.<sup>50</sup> Two of the drawings they brought back from England (Fig.6) almost certainly stem from these assignments.<sup>51</sup> Both depict a block of flats and are stylistically akin to some of the designs that Lucas produced for the first Garden City, Letchworth, Hertfordshire in 1905 (Fig.7). Shared features

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47. Helmore, letter to his father.

48. *Ibid.*

49. Helmore, letter to his mother. 21 November [1920].

50. Helmore, letter to his father. 1 December [1920].

51. CM 2406 and CM 2408. Helmore and Cotterill collection, Canterbury Museum, Christchurch.

include the shingle roofs, overhanging eaves, and the symmetrical ordering of doors and windows. As will be shown in the next chapter, the drawing contains a number of features which recur later in Helmore and Cotterill's work. Of special interest are the jutting eaves. To counteract their downward flow, a gable or dormer window, often standing flush with the wall, is introduced. It is a simple yet most effective way of creating lively shadow patterns and varied surface effects. Surely it is from Lucas that Helmore and Cotterill picked up the idea of using this device.

Drawing up plans and evaluating the locale for large housing estates were not Helmore and Cotterill's only duties. Towards the end of January in 1921 a dispatch from the firm's Indian office was received. In it Lanchester made a request for tracings of various government buildings. He had been commissioned to build a "Parliament house" and was anxious to secure copies of earlier examples so that he might use them as sources of reference.<sup>52</sup> For three days Helmore and Cotterill worked at the Royal Institute of British Architects' Library searching for material that might be of value. The inquiry seems to have been profitable for according to Helmore they "found some extremely interesting books." Helmore also wrote enthusiastically about the holdings of the library. "They have," he wrote, "every book on architecture that has ever been published." Particularly humorous, he found, were "the number of architects who come in to get ideas for some building or other." Writing perhaps with a touch of envy, he concluded his appraisal by saying "things are made very easy for architects in this country."<sup>53</sup>

Conditions at the office also came in for some comment. During the winter of 1920-21 alterations were made to the interior. When the job was completed in early January, Helmore described the office as being "most palatial." Its "enormous rooms," he said, "would put any ChCh office well in the shade."<sup>54</sup> The financial situation of each architect had also improved. In addition to the £30 a month they received from their

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52. Helmore, letter to his mother. 2 February [1921].

53. *Ibid.*

54. Helmore, letter to his father. 7 January 1921.

parents, they were also being paid a weekly wage. "Things are looking up Dad as Mr Lanchester has offered both Guy and I £2-10-0 a week, about £130 a year. Not much but it will help considerably and it is rather nice as they offered it entirely off their own bat."<sup>55</sup> In most cases Helmore was meticulous about documenting his expenses, particularly in the letters he wrote to his father. His election to the Architectural Association in October 1920, for instance, prompted him to explain why he had paid a £3-30-0 subscription that year.<sup>56</sup>

Looking through Helmore's letters, it becomes apparent that he and Cotterill devoted much of their spare time to visiting friends and attending numerous dinner parties. At the beginning of their stay they attempted to trace the whereabouts of various relatives still living in England. Helmore also kept up his contact with Lord Liverpool, sometimes leaving London and vacationing at the latter's estate in Lincoln, Lincolnshire. In nearly all his visits to country houses the architect paid close attention to the design of the building and aspects of the interior decoration. Hartsholme Hall (c.1862), Lord Liverpool's residence, was designed by F.H. Goddard and built in 1862.<sup>57</sup> In one of his letters Helmore describes it as being "very large and early Victorian but most comfortable." Although he disliked the colour of the wallpaper and found most of the furniture "awful," he was impressed by the layout of the formal garden and the view that could be gained from the house.<sup>58</sup> Another home he inspected belonged to a Mr. and Mrs. Borthwick, a couple who had apparently lived in New Zealand at one time and were close friends of the Helmore family.<sup>59</sup> Their house, he wrote, was "modern but

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55. Helmore, letter to his father. 31 October [1920].

56. *Ibid.*

57. The building is no longer extant. See Pevsner and J. Harris, *The Buildings of England, Lincolnshire*. Harmondsworth, 1973, p.477.

58. Helmore, letter to his mother. 19 September [1921]

59. It has not been possible to identify the Borthwicks but it is worth noting that in 1939 Helmore and Cotterill designed a large house for a family of this name. See Appendix A.

built of old materials."<sup>60</sup> Plainly such visits were an important component of Helmore and Cotterill's learning experience.

The types of people Helmore met while living in England is also instructive. Many were not only wealthy but also titled. A large portion of his correspondence contains observations about several dances and balls he attended. At one event he renewed his acquaintance with Lord Claud Hamilton, Louis Mountbatten, and Sir Godfrey Thomas. Also there were the King and Queen of Spain, the Duke of York, and Princess Mary.<sup>61</sup> Despite the cost, Helmore made a point of taking part in as many gatherings as possible. His reason for attending was not always based on pleasure. In a letter to his father, written on 10 June 1921, he stated "I have not been idle in the way of getting introductions from influential people." Moreover, "this kind of thing tells a great deal over here, far more so than in the colonies."<sup>62</sup> From his standpoint, an acquaintanceship with esteemed and well-known personalities was one method of developing contacts and acquiring a *clientèle*.

Indeed, some of the individuals Helmore and Cotterill encountered were able to assist them in their study of English architecture. After viewing an architectural exhibition of measured drawings of old buildings in February 1921, the two architects decided to participate in the show the following year.<sup>63</sup> The building they chose to depict was Doddington Hall (Fig.8), a late Elizabethan structure constructed between 1593 and 1600 and designed by the Midland architect, Robert Smythson (c.1535-1614). The owners were a Mr. and Mrs. Jarvis and were related Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Studholme, a New Zealand couple living in England who were friendly with the two architects.<sup>64</sup> In August Helmore and Cotterill travelled to Lincolnshire and began measuring up the building. The occupants were only too eager to help; besides offering

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60. *Ibid.*

61. Helmore, letter to his mother. 21 November [1920].

62. Helmore, letter to his father. 10 June [1921].

63. Helmore, letter to his mother. 2 February 1921.

64. *Ibid.*



meals whenever the pair were at work, they said the architects could have a reward if they found the silver allegedly hidden in the walls of the hall.<sup>65</sup> Support also came from Lord Liverpool who provided them with accommodation while they stayed in Lincolnshire.<sup>66</sup>

One of the reasons Helmore and Cotterill decided to submit drawings for an exhibition is that a prize of £50 was offered for the best depiction of an old building. The identity of this exhibition is still unclear. Moreover, the results of their endeavour are not known. It may be that they resolved not to submit any drawings. Whatever the case, both had no doubts about the value of such an assignment. In spite of the time and effort, Helmore claimed that this sort of work "is considered better than anything else in the way of architectural education." "Nothing," he remarked, "gives one a better idea of the proportion of these beautiful buildings or impresses it on ones memory more."<sup>67</sup>

Throughout his stay Helmore keenly sought information from New Zealand and his parents. Near the middle of January, 1921, he received news of his grandfather's death and the £1000 legacy that had been left to him.<sup>68</sup> Death duties, though, caused some problems and the family were compelled, somewhat reluctantly, to subdivide Millbrook. Helmore was not slow in offering advice as to what type of house should be built on the vacant sections.

I have fallen in love with the dear old and dignified brick Queen Anne and Georgian houses in this country and am sure that [this] style is just the thing for N.Z. but fear that people will have to be educated up to it first. Therefore a good example to show them would be such a help.<sup>69</sup>

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65. Helmore, letter to his mother. 29 May 1921.

66. Helmore, 2 February 1921.

67. Helmore, letter to his mother. 2 February [1921].

68. Helmore, letter to his father. 15 January [1921].

69. Helmore, letter to his mother. 6 April [1921].

This is a key statement because in the mid and late 1920s one of Helmore and Cotterill's major objectives was to design buildings which were based on English Georgian antecedents. This is particularly evident in their design of masonry buildings. Although the Weston House (1923) in Park Terrace, Christchurch (Fig.9) by Cecil Wood is perhaps the first example of this kind of building to be erected in New Zealand, it is important to remember that Helmore's statement was written well before his former teacher had begun to build in this style. In many ways it was an perceptive, even precocious, remark and puts Helmore firmly in the forefront of the movement.

Another solution for Millbrook was to "lay the whole place out in the true approved Garden Suburb style."<sup>70</sup> Despite its impracticality, Helmore seems to have seriously considered this proposal. He was particularly interested in the range of activity that went into the design of one of these suburbs. Apart from drawing up the plans of a house, an architect was also expected to prepare the layout of the roads, drains, parks, placement of churches, halls and so on. Seen against this background, it is easy to understand why he was so enamoured with his work at Lanchester, Rickards, and Lucas. In one of his letters to his mother, he recounted with some pride how he had organized the whole drainage system at Weybridge.<sup>71</sup>

Towards the end of March, 1921, Helmore and Cotterill considered leaving Lanchester, Rickards, and Lucas. Work on the Garden City schemes was starting to tail off and summer was approaching. Both men were thinking of making a tour of England and the Continent. In addition, the two architects believed that a shift into another office might widen their outlook and increase experience.<sup>72</sup> Matters, though, were complicated by Lucas's invitation for them to return in the autumn. Lanchester was due to return from India shortly and with that came the promise of assisting in the design of a large commission.<sup>73</sup>

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70. *Ibid.*

71. *Ibid.*

72. Helmore, letter to his father. 20 March 1921.

73. *Ibid.*

In July Helmore and Cotterill left the office. Though sorry to leave, they were excited about the prospect of visiting France for two weeks.<sup>74</sup> By the time it came to go, Cotterill changed his mind and decided to take a motor tour through Scotland. Helmore continued on, making arrangements with a Mr. and Mrs. Theo Beswick for a "cheap tour of the Chateaux district of the Loire."<sup>75</sup> During the course of his visit he made a number of sketches (none of which have survived) and inspected various towns.<sup>76</sup> On returning to England the architect embarked on a peregrination around the counties. In Worcestershire he visited Elmley Castle, a "large Elizabethan stone house very much altered in Queen Anne times." At Bath he inspected the roman baths while at Gloucester he scrutinized the cathedral.<sup>77</sup> To all appearances, the vacation was a complete success. Not only did Helmore look over a wide variety of buildings, he also met quite a few people who had similar interests.

Any hopes that Helmore and Cotterill may have had about returning to Lanchester, Rickards, and Lucas were quickly dashed. When they arrived back from their vacation in September they discovered that the government had abandoned work on the Garden City scheme. To compound problems, the firm lost the contract for the large Indian commission. As a result it was forced to trim its budget and lay off most of the office staff. Helmore particularly regretted the dismissal of a Mr. Home, the firm's leading draughtsman, who was dependent on the job for his livelihood.<sup>78</sup> Helmore did not think the situation would improve rapidly as most architectural firms were experiencing difficulties. In general, they tended to employ young and poorly paid assistants. "This," he wrote grimly, "is our main hope."<sup>79</sup>

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74. Helmore, letter to his father. 10 June [1921].

75. Helmore, letter to his mother. 12 July [1921].

76. The identity of these towns is not recorded by Helmore.

77. Helmore, letter to his mother. 11 [August 1921].

78. The man he is referring to is probably Geoffrey Wyville Home. He was admitted to the R.I.B.A. as an Associate in 1911 and became a Fellow in 1931. See *The R.I.B.A. Kalendar, 1938-39*. London, 1938, p.95.

79. Helmore. 11 [August 1921].

Helmore's penchant for collecting introductions soon paid off. Friends had brought him to the attention of the distinguished architect, Sir Edwin Lutyens. In a letter dated 29 September 1921, Lutyens invited him to his office and mentions that "Hamilton" and a "Mrs. St. Lawrence" had provided good references. The identity of the former remains unclear. Presumably it is Lord Claud Hamilton, a friend of both the Prince of Wales and Helmore. Conversely, it could be Gavin M. Hamilton, Lord Liverpool's Private Secretary.<sup>80</sup> No link has yet been established between these men and the famous architect. "Mrs St. Lawrence," however, is almost certainly the same Mrs. St. Lawrence Helmore encountered at a dinner party in May 1921. Her family lived in Ireland and owned Hove Castle which he described as one of the "show places over there."<sup>81</sup> In view of Lutyens's proclivity for mixing with high society, it seems only natural, therefore, that he came into contact with members of Helmore's circle.

There seems little doubt that the purpose of Helmore's visit was to arrange a position in Lutyens's office. Lutyens was one of the most successful architects in England during the first quarter of the twentieth century. He had one of the largest practices and was greatly admired by his peers. Sir John Summerson once stated, "The fact is we were always awed by this man of genius."<sup>82</sup> Helmore also held similar views. Ever since his arrival in London he had maintained a strong regard for the architect. A few weeks after being admitted to Lanchester, Rickards, and Lucas, he joined a group of fellow architects and attended a dinner at the Architectural Association. The highlight of the evening was an address given by Lutyens. On the eve of the banquet he wrote, "I am looking forward very much as I have always had such a great admiration for his work."<sup>83</sup> Given the prestige of Lutyens's office, admittance as an unpaid assistant was achievement enough. Moreover, Helmore was only too aware of the intense

80. See Lutyens, letter to Helmore. 29 September 1921. Collection of Dr. I.J. Lochhead, Christchurch. See also *The New Zealand Official Year-Book, 1919*. London, 1919, p.5.

81. Helmore, letter to his mother. 29 May [1921].

82. G. Stamp, "The Rise and Fall and Rise of Edwin Lutyens," *Architectural Review*, CLXX, November 1981, p.311.

83. Helmore, letter to his father. 11 October 1920.

competition that existed between architects in London. At the dinner he wondered how the "hundreds" of young architects he saw were able to make a living.<sup>84</sup> In such a climate, he may have concluded - quite naturally - that a colonial stood a better chance of establishing a practice in New Zealand than in England.

The same might also be said for Cotterill. More so than Helmore, he was dependent on the monthly stipend of £30 provided by his father. Unlike his colleague, he could not fall back on a sizable inheritance or draw funds from the New Zealand Farmers' Co-operative. To make matters worse, he had not found employment in another office. One reason is that whenever he inquired about an opening he would canvass the question of defrayments. According to Helmore, this approach hindered any chance he had of getting into a "good office." In general, Helmore found that an employer would acquiesce to any pay requests once an assistant had established himself in an office. This had happened with Lanchester, Rickards, and Lucas, and he was hopeful that he could repeat the tactic on Lutyens.<sup>85</sup>

Helmore's interview with Lutyens was successful for on 7 October 1921 he was in a position to send news of his acceptance to his father. His description of Lutyens and the nature of work undertaken is so revealing that it merits quotation in full:

I have been a week in Sir Edwin Lutyens office and it is most awfully interesting and he is the most wonderful personality. Everything even to the smallest detail has to be passed by him before it goes out and now I understand how it is that all his work has that originality. Then he does the work himself which is such a change from most of the big London Architects who never or hardly ever put pencil to paper. Nothing seems to worry him and when the whole staff have been puzzling the whole morning about a certain point he will stroll in and find a solution at once.

Among other work at present is Government House Delhi, an enormous palace in the new Capital of

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84. Helmore, letter to his father. 31 October 1920.

85. Helmore, letter to his mother. 4 November [1921].

India and the Queen's Dolls House, a marvellous toy which I must write an account of later. Sir Edwin Lutyens is designing it and all the arts and crafts [people] are contributing their share which when completed will be the most wonderful thing of its kind ever constructed. For instance Sargent is painting the portraits of the King and Queen etc all the different celebrated artists are decorating the ceilings etc, and the whole thing is being made in a big room in the office under Sir Edwins direct supervision. I was working on the Dining Room panelling today, every detail is perfect.<sup>86</sup> Princess Marie Louise came to the office today to see how the Dolls House was progressing, and I expect we shall have the Queen before long.<sup>87</sup>

This statement corroborates what most secondary sources have documented, namely, Helmore was engaged by Lutyens to work on the Queen's Dolls' House and aspects of the New Delhi commission.

The idea for a Queen's Dolls' House was first mooted in 1920 at a dinner party hosted by Sir Herbert Morgan. Among the guests were Lutyens and Princess Marie Louise. Apparently one of the diners expressed a wish to see a model built for Queen Mary in the style of a Queen Anne or Elizabethan house.<sup>88</sup> Lutyens showed an interest and within a few hours he had prepared some rough sketches. A short time later a committee, chaired by Sir Herbert Morgan, was formed. Those invited to take part included Gertrude Jekyll, who superintended the garden, and George Muntzer, one of Lutyens's principal decorators.<sup>89</sup> By 1924, when the Dolls' House was presented to the Queen, the number of contributors had swelled to 1500.

The house is built of wood but painted to resemble Portland stone. Atop the parapets are lead statues and vases designed by Sir George Frampton.<sup>90</sup> The main

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86. See Fig.10.

87. Helmore, letter to his father. 7 October [1921].

88. C. Hussey, *The Life of Sir Edwin Lutyens*. London, 1950, p.444.

89. *Ibid.* p.451.

90. A.C. Benson and L. Weaver (eds), *Everybody's Book of the Queen's Dolls' House*. London, 1924, p.60.

facade is dominated by a rusticated base, six Corinthian columns, an imposing pediment, and an entablature. Set within this framework are ten windows. The five above the ground floor light the gallery overhanging the grand staircase. On the southern side, where the kitchen and Queen's bedroom lie, the pediment is left out (Fig.11). This allows the architect to provide more illumination for the nursery which is located on the second floor. Facing the east and west are the King's Bedroom, Saloon, Library, and Dining Room. The pitched roof is covered with tiles and pierced by two chimneys. Each room has its own fireplace. The house is 254 centimetres long and 157.48 centimetres wide. The base is 99.06 centimetres high and measures 294.64 centimetres by 182.88 centimetres.<sup>91</sup> In order that the interior can be inspected from all four sides, the walls are designed to be lifted vertically. This is a departure from traditional modes of construction as the walls of most dolls' houses are intended to swing out like doors and reveal the contents.

By all accounts Lutyens and his staff invested a great deal of time and energy in the project. Many detailed drawings of mouldings and panellings were produced. Helmore states that the dolls' house was treated like a "real house."<sup>92</sup> Nearly all the house fittings were made to work; this included not only the lift, but also the bathroom faucets. Special attention was paid to aspects of the interior decoration. The panelling was made to look authentic and the walls were lined with silver and blue brocade. Members of the Royal Family were naturally interested in these developments. On one occasion Helmore visited Queen Mary and exhibited some of his drawings.<sup>93</sup> In early January he met Princess Marie Louise at St. James' Palace where they discussed the progress of the dolls' house. "She showed me," he remarked, "all kinds of amusing things she had been sent and especially some of the books which had come. All the leading writers are writing books for the Library."<sup>94</sup> Judging by the amount of correspondence

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91. *Ibid.* p.58.

92. Helmore, letter to his sister, Kathleen ["Doods"]. Although it is not dated, it was probably written towards the end of 1921.

93. *Ibid.*

94. Helmore, letter to his mother. 9 January [1922].

afforded to the dolls' house, it is apparent that Helmore regarded the project as a major highlight of his London stay.

Like other assistants, Helmore was probably expected to scale and draw up the many small and rough sketches that Lutyens had prepared. Lutyens usually began by sketching the design on large square-sized sheets of paper. Following this, he would turn to 23 centimetre strips of rolled tracing paper. Another method was to sketch the proposed building on pocket pads or "virgins." W.A.S. Lloyd, an assistant between 1924 and 1927, described the process to Christopher Hussey.

To start you off, he [Lutyens] would give you a squared paper draught or one or two scribbles on virgins, always basically dimensioned. You would then go away and thrash it out, with the aid of Batty Langley ("The Bible"), or, if you were very raw, of the hints of someone a little older in the office, and the precedent of an earlier job. Back you would go for more instructions, sometimes merely to be told to "go and do it again," but generally to have the rough places made a little smooth, a little not always explained, by pushing, pulling, and adjusting of balances.<sup>95</sup>

The same treatment was probably meted out to Helmore. On 4 November 1921 he referred to an encounter with "the great man." According to the architect, he needed to show his work to Lutyens in order to have it approved. Although there is no record of the latter's response, Helmore did state that it was "a nerve-racking performance."<sup>96</sup>

Clearly Helmore was greatly impressed with the work done on the Queen's Dolls' House. Despite the small size of the structure, its influence was probably enormous - especially with regard to interior decoration and furnishing. A feature of Helmore and Cotterill's work in New Zealand is their strong predilection for ornate effects. Photographs from the 1920s and 1930s reveal that they liked to fit their domestic buildings very much in the same way as the Queen's Dolls' House. Often there is an abundant use of panelling, bolection moulding, and Georgian style furniture.

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95. Hussey, p.488.

96. Helmore, letter to his mother. 4 November [1921].



In this respect, Helmore and Cotterill were quite unusual for there were very few architects in New Zealand who were as experienced and adept as they were in handling such motifs.

The Queen Mary's Dolls' House was not the only major undertaking for Lutyens and his office in 1922. His work for the Imperial Delhi Committee was still unfinished. In the absence of any further documentation we are left to conjecture about Helmore's contribution to the design of Government House (later known as the Viceroy's House). Lutyens had executed most of the sketches for this structure in 1913 so it seems unlikely that the assistants did very much work on this project in 1921. Nevertheless, it is plausible to assume that Helmore was markedly affected by the strong horizontal emphasis of the Viceroy's House (Fig.12). As will be shown later, horizontality is a dominant hallmark of Helmore and Cotterill's domestic work.

Of particular concern for Lutyens at this time were the Viceregal staff quarters at New Delhi. Many of the designs were not resolved until the early 1920s, almost ten years after the assignment began. The logistics of the scheme were formidable. Over six thousand people had to be accommodated near the main government buildings. This total not only included servants, clerks, aides, police, and soldiers, but also their families and relatives. The site chosen was Raisina Hill, close to the Viceroy's house. A great deal of consideration was given to its positioning. In 1913, when the scheme first began to take shape, Lutyens proposed having it on the northern side, bordering the entrance to Government House and the proposed Imperial Council Chamber. The Imperial Delhi Committee, charged with overseeing the layout of the city, rejected this idea on the basis that a large expensive wall would have to be built in order to mask the stables and servants' quarters.<sup>97</sup> By 1918 it was decided that the staff compound should lie behind the Viceroy's house. The Governor General's Body Guard was to lie on the south-west while on the north-west the staff quarters were to be situated.

97. R.G. Irving, *Indian Summer: Lutyens, Baker, and Imperial Delhi*. New Haven, 1981, pp.227,230.

The presence of three blueprints in the Helmore and Cotterill collection indicates that Helmore may have assisted Lutyens with this particular scheme. Each print is marked with the appellation "Schedule B."<sup>98</sup> One of these plans is signed by Lutyens (Fig.13). It depicts the back loggia of two bungalows planned for the Director of Music and the Assistant Surgeon. In comparison with the loggia designed for the Private Secretary to the Viceroy (Fig.14), they are much smaller in scale. As is the case with other buildings in the complex, the size of each structure denoted the rank of the occupants. In order to mitigate the effects of the hot weather, every house was built out of reinforced concrete, bricks, and packed mud. The loggias and porticos too had a functional role. Aside from lending a classical air to the compositions, they helped shield the entrances from the glaring afternoon sun.

Not all the evidence relating to "Schedule B" upholds the view that Helmore helped Lutyens with the project. The blueprint of the back loggias for the Music Director and Assistant Surgeon is dated 18 September 1918. Helmore could not have worked on it at this time as he was still acting as an escort to the Governor-General in New Zealand. One possible scenario is that he brought the three blueprints back as mementos of his stay in Lutyens's office. Another explanation is that Helmore, like other pupils of Lutyens, used them as models for practice, perhaps borrowing certain elements and transposing them to other compositions. It should also be born in mind that a number of alterations and additions were made over a period of five years. When Lutyens inspected New Delhi in the winter of 1920-21 only one bungalow - the Military Secretary's house - had been completed. Parts of the building did not satisfy the architect, particularly the positioning of lights and the plumbing. To compound matters, questions about finance were being raised by the Legislative Assembly in New Delhi.<sup>99</sup> In view of Lutyens's propensity for "pushing, pulling, and adjusting of balances," one should not discount the possibility, therefore, of Helmore participating in the scheme.

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98. "Schedule B" was the official term for the Viceregal Staff compound. See Irving, p.227.

99. M. Lutyens, *Edwin Lutyens by his daughter*. London, 1980, p.181.

While no documentation has as yet appeared to suggest that he was involved in any other venture, it is reasonable to assume that he had the opportunity of participating or at least observing the design of many more buildings. Of special interest is Gledstone Hall (Fig.15), the last big country house that Lutyens built in Yorkshire (1922-25) and one of his most celebrated classical designs. As is the case with the Viceroy's House in New Delhi, the entrance to the building is marked by a sizable forecourt. At the rear a canal leads away from the house. The entrance front of the main building is symmetrical, reinforced principally by the central portico and the ordered disposition of the windows, gables, and chimneys. Another notable building from this period is the Midland Bank next to St. James's Churchyard in Piccadilly (Fig.16). The exterior is richly adorned. Around the first floor he introduced Gibbs surrounds, large sash windows, and keystones with ornate carvings. On the upper level he added festoons. Such buildings must have made an impact on Helmore. Though he was never to incorporate the same kind of panache and wit into his compositions, he no doubt drew some comfort from the fact that architects of Lutyens's stature still continued to persist with the classical tradition.

Cotterill's attention, however, may have been focused on more mundane matters. In January, 1922, four months after he had returned from his holiday, he was probably still attempting to find a job. Very few of his partner's letters from this period allude to his activities. Perhaps Helmore felt uncomfortable dwelling at any great length on the predicament of his friend and colleague. The last reference to Cotterill occurs on 9 January, 1922. Helmore's parents were planning to take a summer holiday in England. In a letter, the architect promises them that he and "Guy...will both be on the wharf at Southampton" when they arrive.<sup>100</sup> For this to happen, though, it was necessary for him to take leave from work. Significantly, there is no mention of Cotterill requesting a respite from a job.

There is reason to believe, however, that he was in another architect's office by July. According to the biographical note in *Home and Building*, he worked for a time

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100. Helmore, letter to his mother. 9 January [1922].

with Ashley and Newman, a small but respected London architectural firm. The statement is almost certainly correct as the rest of the information contained in the passage accords with other sources. The partnership of Henry Victor Ashley and Francis Winton Newman was formed in 1907. Apart from designing housing schemes for the Marylebone, Westminster, and St. Pancras councils, they are also remembered for the art galleries they built in Birmingham.<sup>101</sup> Newman, in particular, had a reputation for being an adroit draughtsman. His skill was such that he was able to give "undeserved distinction to designs which had otherwise but little claim to it." Watching him work, wrote W.H. Ansell, former President of the R.I.B.A., "was a lesson in decision and efficient mastery of a working drawing which few architects could equal."<sup>102</sup> Because little is known about Cotterill's stay, it is very difficult to determine what effect Ashley and Newman had on him. Given the fact that it was he who prepared most of the drawings for the partnership during the inter-war period, it seems reasonable to assume that the experience improved his drawing skills.

The stage was now set for Helmore and Cotterill to return to New Zealand. Having spent almost three years in London, they were ready to strike out in their own direction. There seems little doubt, however, that the experience had a profound impact on the two architects. At Lanchester, Rickards, and Lucas, they had the opportunity to observe at first hand the design of a garden suburb. Although the project was never realised, the experience stimulated their taste for plain and economical design. On a more practical level, it taught them the value of paying careful attention to the functional aspects of architecture. It is during this period that the two began to forge a partnership. The drawings of Doddington Hall, executed shortly after they left the office, demonstrate their ability to work as one unit. The second phase is no less decisive. Under the aegis of Lutyens, Helmore contributed to the design of the Queen's Dolls' House and the Viceroy's residence. This period almost certainly marks

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101. "Obituary: F. Winton Newman, F R I B A , " *Builder*, CLXXXV, November 1953, p.852.

102. "Obituary: Francis Winton Newman," *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, LXI, December 1953, p.82.

Helmore's conversion to classicism. The lessons that Cotterill learnt, though, may have been quite different. Ashley and Newman did not have the same profile as Lutyens's office. In all probability he used the time to consolidate his draughting skills. By the time Helmore and Cotterill had returned to Christchurch and established the partnership in 1924, they had virtually reached a close understanding of their roles. Helmore, the more extrovert and socially-conscious, went out to get his clients. In general, he acted as the frontman who provided most of the concepts. Cotterill, on the other hand, took care of most of the detailed work. His responsibility was to ensure that his partner's ideas were accurately set down on paper. In the ensuing six years they attempted to consolidate this relationship and create their own identity. Their search for a distinctive approach forms the subject of the following chapter.

## CHAPTER II

### IN SEARCH OF AN IDENTITY

Between 1924 and 1930 Helmore and Cotterill designed approximately 30 buildings. Of these the overwhelming majority were houses.<sup>1</sup> While some projects were quite modest in size, others were very demanding and required the architects to design on a large and grand scale. In most instances, the partner relied on a small but influential network of acquaintances and relatives for support. Clearly Helmore's extensive social contacts greatly helped the firm. The fact that he was a former Aide-de-Camp to the Governor (-General) of New Zealand, had been awarded an M.B.E., and spent some time in Sir Edwin Lutyens's office, meant that he was well placed to seize any opportunity which might arise.<sup>2</sup> In hindsight, the association between Helmore and Cotterill can best be described as a patrician partnership. Unlike Wood or Seager, they rarely branched out into other areas of domestic design. There is no record, for instance, of them designing state houses for low-income workers. The nature of the client - architect relationship was such that Helmore and Cotterill tended to work amongst a limited range of architectural styles. Most of their domestic designs, especially their most important ones, were based on Georgian prototypes. This applied not only to their masonry buildings, but also to their timber designs. By the end of the 1920s they had essentially established an approach which was recognisably their own and which they were to refine and develop in the subsequent years.

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1. The figure does not take into account the numerous alterations and additions that Helmore and Cotterill also carried out during this period. See Appendix A for checklist of buildings.

2. Helmore was awarded an M.B.E. in 1919, presumably for services rendered to the Governor General of New Zealand. See *New Zealand Official Year-Book, 1919*. Wellington, 1919, p.19.

It is important to remember that Helmore worked for a short time on his own. This occurred between February and October, 1923. Why this should have happened is not altogether clear. In all probability, he returned to New Zealand before Cotterill and set about laying the groundwork for the business. His decision to go home may have been prompted by the death of his father. On 30 March 1922 his parents left New Zealand for England. George Helmore had not been feeling well for some time and it was felt by members of the family that a change of scene might palliate his condition. It did not and on 28 June he died at New Lodge Windsor Forest, Berkshire.<sup>3</sup> Now that Helmore was no longer assured of a regular stipend, he might have decided that it was time to depart and start his own practice.<sup>4</sup> It seems unlikely that he stayed until October as Lutyens had left London by this date.<sup>5</sup> Every winter since 1919 the English architect would journey out to India and supervise the construction of the Viceroy's House and other government buildings. By February 1923 Helmore was residing in New Zealand. On the 21st of that month at a meeting of the Canterbury Branch of the N.Z.I.A., the chairman, Cecil Wood, formally welcomed him back to Christchurch.<sup>6</sup>

Cotterill's movements, on the other hand, are more difficult to document. Given the fact that he had been in close touch with Helmore for more than two years, one might easily conclude that he returned to New Zealand at the same time. The absence of any kind of reference to his name in the minutes of the Canterbury Branch of the N.Z.I.A. does not invalidate the argument. Between 1924 and 1940 he rarely attended branch committee meetings. What seems to complicate matters is that the

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3. See Probate file of George Henry Noble Helmore, CH 171, PR 11985/1922. National Archives, Christchurch. Also see "Death of Mr G.H.N. Helmore," *Press*, 1 July 1922, p.10.

4. If Helmore did receive a wage from Lutyens it cannot have been very much. According to Margaret Richardson, the rate of pay was low, although Lutyens did provide good testimonials. See *Lutyens, the Work of the English Architect: Sir Edwin Lutyens (1869-1944)*. London, 1981, p.185.

5. Lutyens left for India on 28 September 1922. See Mary Lutyens, p.193.

6. *Minutes*, 21 February 1923. Canterbury Branch of the N.Z.I.A., Christchurch.

partnership did not take shape until February 1924. The jobs Helmore did in 1923 were carried out without the help of anyone. None of the drawings from that year bear the signature of another architect. Either the two men had not yet resolved the terms of their partnership or, as is most likely the case, Cotterill was still working in London.

It was appropriate that Wood should greet Helmore as he was one of the leading architects in Christchurch. Helmore would have found much to interest him, particularly the Weston House (Fig.9) which Wood was designing at the time. The Georgian style of the building must have seemed the physical embodiment of what Helmore had seen a few months back in England. In all probability, he would have told Wood about his experiences abroad and how it had affected his view of architecture. In particular, he may have talked to Wood about his admiration for "the dignified brick Queen Anne and Georgian houses" and how desirable it was to construct such buildings in New Zealand. Both architects no doubt admired such figures as Ernest Newton (1856-1922) and Mervyn Macartney (1853-1932). These two men, who had their roots in the Arts and Crafts Movement, were instrumental in promoting the Neo-Georgian style in England. Other architects who contributed to the movement were Halsey Ricardo (1854-1928), Horace Field (1861-1948), and Robert Lorimer (1864-1929). The influence of Sir Christopher Wren was a key factor. In the 1880s architects like Philip Webb (1831-1915), John Brydon (1840-1901), and Norman Shaw (1831-1912), prompted to some extent by the publication of Arthur Mackmurdo's (1853-1932) book on City of London churches, began to take an interest in his work. Members of the Art Workers' Guild were also alert to the potentialities of Wren's achievements and by the late 1890s some of them were producing "very free Wren type" house designs.<sup>7</sup> Mention should also be made of Lutyens. His design for Heathcote (Fig.17), close to Ilkley, Yorkshire (1906), while not strictly Neo-Georgian, reflects an obvious debt to Michele Sanmicheli (c.1484-1559) and Sir Christopher Wren (1632-1723). According to Lutyens, Wren had a "marvellous" understanding of Palladio.<sup>8</sup>

7. A. Service, *Edwardian Architecture: A handbook to Building Design in Britain, 1890-1914*. London, 1977, p.170.

8. Lutyens: *The Work of the English Architect Sir Edwin Lutyens (1869-1944)*. p.108.



Much of this would have been familiar to Wood as he had also spent some time in England (1901-06). Weston House, for instance, may have been inspired by Yew Tree Lodge, Streatham Park, London of 1898-99 (Fig.18). The house was designed by Leonard Stokes (1858-1925), one of his teachers.<sup>9</sup> Shared features include the sash windows, brick exterior, quoins, and dormer windows. In addition, Wood almost certainly had recourse to the *Architectural Review* which in 1906 ran a series of articles extolling the virtues of the style. Three years later he could have picked up a booklet entitled *An Aesthetic Conversion* (Heal and Son, London.) With interior design and furniture as its main focus the booklet posited the view that Palladian or "Colonial Adam" was infinitely preferable to such styles as Art Nouveau.<sup>10</sup> By the mid 1920s books such as *English Rooms and Their Decoration at a Glance; volume II, 1620-1800*, by Charles H. Hayward were reaching New Zealand.

During the first year of his return Helmore had very little opportunity of capitalising on this trend. All the work he did in 1923 revolved around alterations and additions. At such an early stage of his career he still was not in a position to establish a name for himself. Not surprisingly, he attracted only a couple of clients. In a sense this period serves as a prelude to the formalization of the partnership in 1924. Despite the small number of commissions, it is likely that he used the time to renew connections, sort out future jobs, and prepare a base for Cotterill's return.

His first commission was for Dr. C.L. Nedwill. The architect was required to make a number of alterations and additions to the client's house in Cashmere, Christchurch. Two balconies, a drawing room, and an extra bedroom were added to the main block (Fig.19). The existing rooms were also modified. Apart from shifting the kitchen and dining room to other parts of the site, the architect introduced extra partitions. The building is set on a slope and as such, necessitated a number of

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9. For a description of Yew Lodge see G. Stamp, and A. Goulancourt, *The English House, 1860-1914: The Flowering of English Domestic Architecture*. London, 1986, pp.202-203.

10. Service, p.177.

adjustments to the foundations and the height of the ground floor walls. Certain aspects of the composition are indebted to the work of other architects. The marked horizontality of the north elevation, characterised by the long extension of the hipped roof, recalls Wood. Another feature is the roughcast surface of the walls. Like Wood, Helmore uses timber in a restrained manner. The boards which clad the ground floor walls are arranged vertically and braced with cover fillets. The connection between the two men is underlined further by the placement of the two balconies. As is the case with Racecourse Hill, the projecting bays are positioned at either corner of the north side. Parts of the interior arrangement, perhaps, reflect the influence of Helmore's involvement with the Queen's Dolls' House. The walls of the drawing room and the main bedroom are relatively ornate. Both include moulded fillets and a moulded cornice. Similarly, the fireplace in the dining room has 15 centimetre bolection moulded surrounds, a feature which recurs in many of Helmore and Cotterill's later designs.

The contract for Helmore's next commission was signed on 10 October 1923. As before, the client wished to make a number of alterations and additions to his home.<sup>11</sup> The house, a conventional bay villa dating from the turn of the century or thereabouts, was one storey high and had a low-pitch roof (Fig.20). In order to create more space for the occupants, Helmore attached a rectangular wing to the western side. It consisted of three main rooms; a nursery, a kitchen, and a maid's bedroom. They were linked to the other apartments by an adjoining verandah and a passageway which ran straight through the old and new sections. Though the additions do not represent a major statement, they shed some light on the architect's preferences. As with the Nedwill House, prominent use was made of wooden panelling - especially around the walls and cupboard. Wherever possible, Helmore introduced mullioned and transomed windows. Perhaps the most intriguing quality was the strong horizontal emphasis of the new wing. This feature blends harmoniously with the rest of the house and is indicative

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11. The client was H. Kitson. See Appendix A.

of Helmore's desire to merge the old and new parts in such a way that they are virtually indistinguishable.

From 10 January 1924 Cotterill was working with Helmore.<sup>12</sup> Like Helmore, he would have been interested to hear what had happened during his absence. Though his views on architecture are not as well documented as his colleague's, he probably concurred with the view that brick Georgian houses were "just the thing for New Zealand." Presumably he showed some interest in the Weston House as it tied in so well with Helmore's conception of the future. For both architects, the house must have acted as a kind of beacon and served to indicate the sort of direction they intended to follow.

During the first two years of the partnership, however, the architects pursued a circuitous route. Not until 1926 did they consciously emulate Wood's example. Before examining any of their masonry buildings from this year, it is instructive to discuss some of their earlier brick buildings and analyse why they chose a different approach.

A notable example is the Maunsell House in the Wairarapa (1925). The client was B. Maunsell, co-founder of the Hansells Food Company. He lived a few miles north of Masterton at "Rathkeale," a farm which later became the site for a private secondary school. The house was the first large masonry structure built by Helmore and Cotterill. Parts of the brickwork were left exposed while other portions, particularly the exterior, were covered with a cement facing. From a distance it seems to hug the flat contours of the land (Figs.21-22). The impression is reinforced by the rectangular shape of the house and uninterrupted roof line. In some respects, the house is reminiscent of some of Lutyens's early designs. This is particularly obvious in the treatment of the chimneys which are tall and thin. The fact that the house was set in a rural context may explain why it is quite different to the Weston House. In a large and expansive setting, it seemed only natural to take advantage of the site and build outwards. Houses like the Weston House, which are more suited to a urban or semi-

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12. See *N.Z.I.A. Journal*, p.187. Records of the N.Z.I.A. J.C. Beaglehole Room, University of Victoria, Wellington.

urban environment, are usually restricted in size and largely formal in character. When Helmore wrote about his admiration for "old and dignified brick Queen Anne and Georgian houses," he was almost certainly referring to eighteenth-century buildings he had seen London. The desire to build the Maunsell House in this style, therefore, would not have been so acute.

When Helmore and Cotterill did get the opportunity to construct masonry houses in a city, they did not immediately switch to the Neo-Georgian style. At the Charles Birch House (Figs.23-24) in 53 Murphy Street, Wellington (1925) they adopted a different approach. Because the site is small, contorted in shape, and set on a gradient, the architects were forced to abandon the standard rectangular plan and opt instead for a L shape configuration. The most arresting feature of the house is the large bay window on the main front. In some respects, it resembles an apse. Though it is not vaulted, the shape of the roof suggests the ceiling on the upper floor is arched or dome-structured. A similar feature was used in the design of the Isaac Bell, Jr., House (Fig.25) by Charles Follen McKim (1847-1909), William Rutherford Mead (1846-1928), and Stanford White (1853-1906). In 1900 these three architects had one of the largest and most productive practices in the United States. Helmore and Cotterill almost certainly knew their work and may have seen the 1915 monograph on McKim, Mead, and White.<sup>13</sup> While this publication does not possess an illustration of the Bell House, it is possible that Helmore and Cotterill stumbled across a plate in a foreign journal. Whatever the case, the motif never reappeared in their work. In all probability they felt uncomfortable about making such a strong statement. As will be shown, the architects were most happy when they pursued a correct, almost academic approach, and did not depart too far from traditional formulae.

By the mid 1920s Helmore and Cotterill were designing brick houses similar to the Weston House. Two of the most important examples are the J.B. MacEwen House (1926) and the J.C. Crawford House (1927-28). The first (Figs.26-27) is located

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13. See *A Monograph of the Works of McKim, Mead, and White: 1879-1915*. 1915. rpt. New York, 1977.

in Fitzherbert Terrace, Wellington, and is set on a slope. Unlike the Birch House, the section allowed enough room for a rear garden and a rectangular shape plan. In keeping with the Neo-Georgian style, Helmore and Cotterill incorporate such standard items as tall chimneys and sash windows. Both the front and rear façades are symmetrically designed, the roof is double hipped, and the main entrance is located in the centre of the composition. Inspired, perhaps, by Wood, the architects have enlivened the corners by introducing projecting brick quoins. The connection between it and the Weston House is further underscored by the line of small dentils underneath the eaves. A similar approach was adopted by Helmore and Cotterill with the J.C. Crawford House (1927-28). It too is located in the Wellington region and built of brick (Fig.28). Aspects of the north façade bear a close resemblance to the garden front of the Weston House. In the centre of the composition is a recess with columns on either side of the entrance. It is topped by a prominent entablature and painted white in order to differentiate it from the uniform reds of the brick walls. In both instances, the façade is symmetrically organized.

Whereas the later masonry houses of Helmore and Cotterill tend to follow the lead of Wood, they were making important innovations with timber during the 1920s. Of special significance is the Pinckney House (Fig.29). It was built in 1924, the year Helmore and Cotterill established their partnership, and is located at 8 Holly Road, Christchurch. It is easy to underestimate the importance of the Pinckney House. The style is unobtrusive and allows the building to blend in comfortably with its surroundings. Indeed, it is possible to pass the building without ever noticing it. One reason is that numerous examples of this kind of architecture exist in Christchurch. After a while one can become completely inured to the style and cease to notice the finer points. What distinguishes the Pinckney House from other similar versions is that it was the first timber house to be erected in New Zealand which consciously emulated American Colonial antecedents. In particular, it is indebted to the Wren-Baroque houses found in Virginia and New England. The term is slightly misleading for Wren is not thought to have designed any small detached houses. It has stuck, though, because

these buildings exhibit qualities that are often associated with the English architect's work.<sup>14</sup>

The key Wren-Baroque house is "Westover" (Fig.30), a plantation house built in Charles City County (c.1730-34), Virginia. This type of building was emulated throughout the colony and in time auspicated a number of variations. In situations where it was not feasible to build in brick or stone, the owners settled for timber. The Mulberry House (Fig.31) in Deerfield, Massachusetts (1752) represents the more simplified approach; it is rectangular in shape, it has a single pitch roof, and the main façade is symmetrical. It is primarily this sort of building which Helmore and Cotterill had in mind when they designed the Pinckney House. Both are clad in weatherboards, the sash windows have louvered shutters, and the roofs are covered in shingles. Most of the ornamentation is centred around the entrance. It is here that builders tend to manipulate the details and explore different combinations. Sometimes the entrance is simply flanked by pilasters and capped by a plain pediment. In other cases the builders would introduce an entablature and a swan's neck pediment. With the Pinckney House, Helmore and Cotterill have projected the pediment out from the main façade. It is supported by two wooden pillars and flanked on either side by a wooden lattice.

Within a short time other New Zealand architects were using the style. The interest in Wren-Baroque houses, especially the simplified form, can be put down to a number of factors. They were reasonably inexpensive to build, easy to maintain, and, most important, popular with the clients. As late as 1945 illustrations of "colonial style" buildings were appearing in *Home and Building*.<sup>15</sup> The house W.S.R. Bloomfield designed for L.W. Rainger, for example, had a Palladian window and green louvered shutters. The walls were clad in weatherboards and painted cream. The main entrance was framed by a swan's neck pediment, entablature, and two Corinthian pilasters (Fig.32). In keeping with American prototypes, panelling was used for the interior.

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14. For a discussion on the Wren-Baroque houses see W.H. Pierson, Jr., *American Buildings and their Architects: the Colonial and Neo-Classical styles*, New York, 1970, pp.61-110.

15. "Colonial Style always Popular," *Home and Building*, VIII, June 1945, p.15.

Here the architect's intention was to convey "an air of dignity."<sup>16</sup> Inevitably one is confronted by a number of questions. Do such houses look slap-dash, are they cut-rate versions of a more refined type of building, and how do they relate to existing styles in New Zealand?

In the case of Helmore and Cotterill, the answer is relatively straightforward. For both architects, the Colonial Georgian style was an alternative to the more formal and expensive English Neo-Georgian style. Clearly not all their clients wanted to live in brick buildings like the MacEwen or Crawford House. Moreover, many people in New Zealand were accustomed to timber housing. Though stone and brick were widely regarded as ideal building materials, timber was cheap, very plentiful, and earthquake-resistant. It seems unlikely that Helmore and Cotterill saw the style as an abasement of the classical tradition. In all probability, they viewed themselves as exponents of a new form (at least in New Zealand) of timber construction which they were attempting to elevate it to the same level as some forms of masonry construction.

To gauge the extent of Helmore and Cotterill's understanding of the style, one only has to compare the Pinckney House with the house G.E. Tole designed for T. Fox (Fig.33) in Parnell, Auckland. At first glance, the latter seems no different from other buildings of this type. There is a swan's neck pediment above the central doorway, the walls are weatherboarded, and the roof is clad with shingles. A closer examination reveals a discrepancy in the treatment of the proportions. Normally one would expect the windows on the first floor to be the same size as those on the ground. Furthermore, each would be separated by a slight interval rather than strung together in a row. The use of casement windows instead of the double-hung variety also seems inconsistent with the style. In contrast, Helmore and Cotterill rigourously adhere to the earlier methods of design. The fenestration is regular in size and spread evenly across the façade. Though the architects might be criticized for introducing a style which is foreign and unrelated, it is difficult to fault them on archaeological grounds. Indeed, a distinguishing feature of their approach is the amount of authority they are able to

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16. *Ibid.*

convey. If buildings were to be judged solely on the basis of integrity and strength of conviction, then one would have little difficulty in mounting a successful case for the Pinckney House.

Perhaps Helmore and Cotterill's most important timber house of the 1920s, certainly their most ambitious, is "Fernside," a large Georgian revival building situated not far from Featherston, Wairarapa (Fig.34). It was built for Charles Edgar Elgar, a wealthy landowner.<sup>17</sup> The Elgars often resided in Wellington during the winter months and it is probably on one of these occasions when Helmore was acting as an Aide-de-Camp that they first came into contact. Mrs Ella Elgar (née Pharazyn) was a noted traveller and enjoyed collecting expensive antiques. Helmore was similarly inclined and no doubt had much to say when he met her in England during the summer of 1921.<sup>18</sup> His acquaintance proved to be propitious; when their homestead burned down in 1923 they immediately turned to the architect and asked him to design a new building.<sup>19</sup>

The house occupies over 3075 square metres and contains more than forty rooms. Some of the apartments, notably the living room and the main bedroom, are 12 metres in length. Many of the remaining spaces performed a narrow function. One of the rooms was set aside for flower arranging. Another held shoes. In addition to a boiler room, there was also a dairy, ironing room, and a phone room. Great pains were taken to make living in the house as comfortable as possible. To minimize the inconvenience of travelling from the ground floor to the top level, for instance, an elevator was installed. The occupants also had recourse to a central heating system.

The decision to design "Fernside" in the Georgian style was undoubtedly influenced by what Helmore and Cotterill had observed abroad. Much of the interior decoration was based on English prototypes. The dining room, for example, was "treated in peach coloured paintwork with a Georgian panelled dado mantelpiece and

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17. C. Cromie, "From an era of elegance," *New Zealand Sunday Times*, 9 November 1986, p.11.

18. See Helmore, letter to his sister, Ella. 29 June [1921].

19. Cromie. Also see R. Annabell, "Country estate goes under the hammer," *Wairarapa Times-Age*, 24 September 1986, p.3.



fine old carved overmantel brought from England for the purpose."<sup>20</sup> Moreover, Mrs. Elgar's bedroom was "painted in pale blue with plaster decoration in the Adams style."<sup>21</sup> The dignified character of the garden may have also had a bearing. In addition to walled "carriage gardens," the site included statuary, a sunken rose garden, an Italianate pool, and a terraced stream. As is the case with schemes like Gledstone Hall by Lutyens, the formal qualities of the setting and the house are synthesized to form a distinctive and unified whole.

An examination of "Fernside" would be incomplete without some mention of the Queen's Dolls' House. A point worth noting is the treatment of building materials. Both houses are built of wood yet aspects of the designs are altered in order to convey an appearance of stone. With the Dolls' House, paint is used to disguise the actual surface qualities. In the case of "Fernside," the corners are made to resemble wide fluted marble pilasters. It is also tempting to highlight the scale of each building. Prior to "Fernside," Helmore and Cotterill had produced only modest sized houses. When confronted with the task of creating a much bigger structure, Helmore may have reflected on what he had seen in London. The most likely source of influence was the Queen's Dolls' House. He had extensive knowledge of the mechanics and fittings and was well versed in the style of the period. It is important to remember that in spite of its size, the Dolls' House was scaled to resemble a grand and magnificent Georgian mansion. The numerous servants' quarters, washrooms, and staterooms which are so much a part of the design, are also a key feature of "Fernside."

The influence of early American architecture on Helmore and Cotterill was another key factor. During their visit to the United States in 1920, they would have seen numerous eighteenth-century buildings. Houses such as the Julius Deming House (Fig.35) in Litchfield, Connecticut (1790-93) are to be found throughout the east coast. In nearly all timber houses of this type, sash windows and hipped roofs are *de rigueur*. Moreover, the central entrance is always the most important focus of attention. Here

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20. "A Country House at Featherston," *Home and Building*, III, November 1938, p.11.

21. *Ibid.*

most of the ornament is concentrated. Although Helmore and Cotterill were conscious of these factors, they do not appear to have deliberately borrowed from one source. More often than not, they appropriated elements from a wide range of designs and welded them together to form a single unit. Thus, the central portico may owe more to the Federal style than to the architecture of the late colonial period. Like the Thomas Poynton Ives House (Fig.36) in Providence, Rhode Island (1806) it is projected prominently from the wall. Atop is a rounded balustrade. Whether the architects were aware of this particular building is open to speculation. Very probably it was the cumulative effect of seeing so many similar designs that induced them to use this motif.<sup>22</sup>

In discussing the types of influences that affected Helmore and Cotterill, we have concerned ourselves primarily with Lutyens and a small selection of eighteenth-century American buildings. A factor which should also be considered is the work of McKim, Mead, and White. As we have seen, they may have influenced Helmore and Cotterill to place a large bay window on the main façade of the Murphy House in Wellington. In the field of timber housing the American architects were to exert an even greater impact. Like Helmore and Cotterill, a sizable proportion of their wooden houses fell back on Georgian prototypes, particularly those from the colonial period of American architectural history. It is probably this style of building, sometimes referred to as "Colonial Revival," that influenced Helmore and Cotterill the most.<sup>23</sup> It began in the 1870s, approximately the same time McKim, Mead, and White formed their partnership, and lasted well into the 1920s.

Even if Helmore and Cotterill had not seen any buildings by McKim, Mead, and White during their visit to the United States in 1920, it is quite probable that they made use of the illustrations in the 1915 monograph on the three architects. One

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22. It is somewhat appropriate that after Mrs. Elgar's death in 1946, "Fernside" was sold to the United States Government and used as a country retreat by two ambassadors. See R. Annabell.

23. For a discussion on the "Colonial Revival" style see W.B. Rhoads, "The Colonial Revival and American Nationalism," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, XXXV, December 1976, pp.239-254.

building which may have caught their attention is the Henry A.C. Taylor House (1882, 1885-86) at Newport, Rhode Island (Fig.37). It too was built of weatherboards and roofed in shingles. The main entrance is dominated by a balconied portico. Interestingly enough, the architects of both homes had intended to use masonry. The clients, perhaps for economic reasons, had a change of heart and instructed them to build in timber. Another house in the volume which may have aroused their interest is the A.A. Pope Residence (Fig.38) in Farmington, Connecticut (1900). Like "Fernside" it had an L-shape plan. It is unlikely that Helmore and Cotterill borrowed this feature from an earlier source as most American colonial timber houses tended to be rectangular in shape. The Pope Residence could have also been on their minds when they built the "Four Peaks" homestead (Fig.39) in South Canterbury (1925). The main façades of both buildings exhibit a number of similarities, particularly in the treatment of the proportions. The entrance is located in the centre and flanked at regular intervals by sash windows with louvered shutters, the roof is single hipped, and the eaves terminate just below the window hoods. The point which needs to be made is that Helmore and Cotterill were not just indebted to eighteenth-century sources, they were also looking at work closer to their own period. Moreover, architects like McKim, Mead, and White proved that it was acceptable, even very fashionable, to work in this manner. Given that this aspect of their output is now being assessed in a more positive light by architectural historians, it no longer seems reasonable to dismiss "Colonial Revival" as peripheral or superfluous.<sup>24</sup>

Other American architects may have had an impact on Helmore and Cotterill. Among those who followed McKim, Mead, and White's example were Aymer Embury II (1880-1966), William Adams Delano (1874-1960), Chester Holmes Aldrich (1871-1940), Charles A. Platt (1861-1933, and David Adler (1882-1949). They worked primarily in the eastern states and incorporated many colonial features into their

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24. "They [Colonial Revival houses] represent a style of building which has the virtue of safety, but not of exciting originality. Despite their advantages they retard rather than advance the development of an architectural peculiarly New Zealand in its character." P. Pascoe, "Houses," *Making New Zealand*, vol. II, no. 20, Wellington, 1940, p.18.

designs. A strain which runs throughout their work is symmetry. This applies not only to the organisation of the façade, but also to the massing (Fig.40).<sup>25</sup> In some instances, they liked to juxtapose their Georgian houses with a formal Italian garden. The use of a terrace and balustrades at "Fernside" is in keeping with this approach and may owe something to the work of Platt who is thought to have introduced it.<sup>26</sup> One should also not forget that the restoration of Williamsburg, begun in 1927 by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., formed an important backdrop. As is the case with any revival, a major restoration or archaeological discovery can often lead to an upsurge of interest.

The question immediately arises: were Helmore and Cotterill solely looking at American examples or were they also influenced by New Zealand colonial precedents? Given their interest in Georgian design, it would have been logical for them to have shown an interest in such New Zealand colonial buildings as the Waitangi Treaty House (1832-34) by John Verge or the Mission House in Waimate North (1832). The fact that these rather modest houses had very little impact on Helmore and Cotterill, suggests the two architects were not very concerned about drawing a link between their work and the early styles of building in New Zealand. If they were intent on recreating these designs and establishing a national idiom, it seems unlikely that they would have patterned their designs on the work of McKim, Mead, and White. This raises doubts about the appropriateness of modelling a New Zealand house on American colonial precedents. In the United States the key monuments of the eighteenth-century were George Washington's home, Mount Vernon, Virginia and the John Hancock House in Boston. For many American architects of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, these buildings had special national significance and contained qualities which were peculiar to their own country. In hindsight, it seems somewhat incongruous to find two architects in New Zealand pursuing a similar direction, especially in a country which has its own set of customs and traditions.

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25. M. Whiffen and F. Koeper, *American Architecture, 1607-1976*. London, 1981, p.285.

26. *Ibid.*

For Helmore and Cotterill and their clients this does not appear to have been a major issue. They were more interested in the formal qualities rather than the associational aspects of the style. Perhaps the only justification Helmore and Cotterill could use is that they always endeavoured to work within the boundaries of the style. In the case of buildings like "Fernside" and "Four Peaks," there are no striking additions or unusual manipulations of the form. As with the Pinckney House, what mattered most was the appearance of the building. So long as the design held together and was consistent with tradition, there seemed no point in fretting about questions of relevance and applicability.

Given the enormous size of "Fernside," it comes as no surprise that some New Zealand architects were beginning to show an interest in the building. Not far from the site lay "Rototawai" homestead (Fig.41). It was constructed in the early 1930s after a fire destroyed the original building in 1928.<sup>27</sup> The architect, Stanley W. Fearn, and the client, W.E. Bidwill, wanted the design to be "a free interpretation of English Georgian."<sup>28</sup> Like "Fernside," the entrance front is symmetrically arranged. Both draw the viewer's attention to the central entrance. In the case of "Fernside," it is the portico and balcony which dominate the setting. For "Rototawai," the most important feature is the *porte-cochère*. What sets the two buildings apart, however, is the level of assuredness conveyed by each design. Whereas "Fernside" seems totally at ease and in complete harmony with itself, "Rototawai" communicates a certain amount of hesitancy and awkwardness. This is particularly evident in the treatment of the brick wall above the main entrance. Here the architect seems to have been unsure about what approach to take. The wall cuts into the roof and appears to completely shroud the hipped gable behind it. Such inconsistencies serve to illustrate Helmore and Cotterill's grasp of detail and the high degree of authority which they were able to invest in their work.

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27. This information was supplied by Mr. R.G. McJorow from the *Wairarapa Times-Age*.

28. "Rototawai, Featherston: A Country Home near Wellington," *Home and Building*, II, May 1938, p.10.

Cecil Wood may have also taken some interest in Helmore and Cotterill's work. His design for Bishops court (1927) embodies many of the characteristics found at "Fernside." Though not as big (it contains only 22 rooms), it is set in spacious grounds (Fig.42). Most of the sash windows are adorned with louvered shutters. The roof, moreover, is clad in slates.<sup>29</sup> It is tempting to speculate on the relationship between the younger architects and Wood. Presumably they may have encouraged him to make a trip to the United States in 1927. In view of the fact that only a few years separate "Fernside" and Bishops court, there seems a real possibility that some kind of exchange took place.

Before proceeding any further, it is worth noting that not all their timber houses followed the "Colonial Revival" style. Some of them seem only to make a passing reference to American colonial precedents. Perhaps the most important house which falls into this category is the George R. MacDonald Residence (Figs.43-44). It is located in Ethleton near Lowry Hills and was built in 1925, the same year as the "Four Peaks" homestead. Like its counterpart, the only types of windows used are the sash variety. A significant difference, however, is the treatment of the building materials. Instead of employing weatherboards for the exterior, the architects use vertical board and batten. Furthermore, they discard shingles for the roof in favour of corrugated iron. Another distinctive feature is the strong horizontal emphasis. The roof, which is taller in height than the ground floor walls, appears to spread out and enfold most parts of the house. The effect is enhanced by the two wings which extend from the main block. Their gables are hipped and serve to iterate the movement outwards. As we shall see, this interest in horizontality was a key feature of many of Helmore and Cotterill's later buildings. It was particularly suited to their rural designs as there was less need to build upwards.

In the field of commercial architecture, however, Helmore and Cotterill had very few opportunities to apply the same principles which guided their domestic designs.

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29. "Bishops court, an imposing residence, Georgian style followed," *Press*, 2 June 1927, p.4.

During the inter-war period only one major commercial commission was awarded to the firm. Their lack of achievement in this area is at odds with the success they enjoyed in the area of domestic design. Quite likely, most people viewed them solely as designers of large and comfortable dwellings. The impression was no doubt underlined by the fact that in the first four years of the partnership, they did nothing else but design and renovate houses. Another factor which may have affected the judgement of prospective clients was that Helmore had trained for a time with Lutyens. In the 1920s those New Zealanders familiar with his work would have only known about his domestic designs. The two main avenues open to them would have been magazines such as *Country Life*, which mainly concentrated on homes and gardens, and publications like *Everybody's Book of the Queen's Dolls' House* by A.C. Benson and L. Weaver (London, 1924). During the 1930s the main reason would have been the economic depression. The problem was not peculiar to Helmore and Cotterill. Many of their colleagues who worked in this sphere were also affected by the standstill in building activity.

Helmore and Cotterill's largest and most important commercial commission was the Cook and Ross Building (Fig.45) of 1926-27. It is built of concrete and red brick and reflects their keen interest in the Georgian style. On the ground floor there is a rusticated base. Above are the sash windows which are placed on two levels and symmetrically disposed. At the top is a similar line of dormer windows. In relation to the types of commercial buildings that Lutyens designed, the Cook and Ross Building is relatively conservative. Unlike the Piccadilly Branch of the Midland Bank (Fig.16) there is no radical experimentation with the style. Though Helmore may have admired Lutyens's work, he does not appear to have shared his view that architecture should be treated like a "game."<sup>30</sup> In some respects, Helmore and Cotterill's approach was more in keeping with less adventurous but academically correct technique pursued by Sir Reginald Blomfield, a contemporary of Lutyens. A useful comparison is his National

30. In a famous letter to Herbert Baker (1862-1946), dated 1903, Lutyens stated: "In architecture Palladio is the game. It is so big - few appreciate it now and it requires considerable training to value and realize it... . So it is a big game, a high game, a game that Stevens played as an artist should - tho' he never touched Wren.," *Lutyens: The Work of the English Architect Sir Edwin Lutyens (1869-1944)*. p.108.

Westminster Bank at 224 King's Road Chelsea (Fig.46) of 1909. Like the Cook and Ross Building there are no sudden surprises or unexpected twists. Despite their understated appearance, such buildings never fail to look attractive - something which cannot always be said for some modernist designs.

Though Helmore and Cotterill would have been disappointed about not breaking into the lucrative commercial trade, it is unlikely that they would have expressed much dissatisfaction with the state of the house market. The majority of clients had no qualms about paying large sums of money for their houses. Alexander Bowman, who worked in the architects' office as an assistant between 1934 and 1938, states that most of the patrons "were comparatively wealthy."<sup>31</sup> Many of the owners "were either friends or acquaintances."<sup>32</sup> Moreover, Helmore and Cotterill worked only with a small number of builders, usually those who were conversant with their brand of design. Often the lowest of public tenders was not accepted. According to Bowman, this practice of selecting tried and trusted contractors obviated any chance of legal proceedings taking place.<sup>33</sup>

A logical outcome is the high quality of craftsmanship. This is particularly evident in the treatment of Georgian motifs. The home of Algar T. Williams (Fig.47), for instance, was commended in the *Press* for its "artistry of furnishing and interior decoration."<sup>34</sup> Of special interest was the main living room. "The influence of the period," wrote the anonymous critic, "has been expressed by the applied panelling on the walls. These have been painted a light blue, and then a dark blue glaze has been applied and stippled, while the mouldings have been rubbed to give a high light, and thus outline the panels."<sup>35</sup> Quite possibly, the interest in these types of decorative

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31. Alexander Bowman, answer to a questionnaire set by the author, October 1988. A copy is held at the School of Fine Arts, University of Canterbury, Christchurch.

32. *Ibid.*

33. *Ibid.*

34. "In Wairarapa Terrace: A Home in Georgian Architecture, Beauty of Design and Setting, Artistic Decoration of the Interior," *Press*, 16 May 1935, p.5.

35. *Ibid.*



effects stems from the work Helmore did on the Queen's Dolls' House. As we have noted, he executed many drawings of the panelling for the Dining Room. In the light of the work he later did in New Zealand, this experience must have been invaluable for it allowed him to observe at close quarters the way craftsmen set about constructing such details, albeit on a miniaturized scale.

A feature of the Algar Williams House was the use of colour. Whereas the exterior walls were painted cream, the chimneys and window frames were covered in white. The louvered shutters and roof, however, were rendered green. To create more variety, the architects had the front door coated in a deep orange. A similar effect is found inside. The recesses in the main living room were painted in muted lavender tones, "against which the shelves, painted in the same colour as the walls of the room, stand out in good contrast."<sup>36</sup> For the fireplace, the architects employed cream-coloured Mount Somers stone.

Mention should also be made of the setting. Throughout his life Helmore maintained a keen interest in garden design. Whenever the opportunity arose, he would attempt to blend the natural surroundings with the formal aspects of the house design. In the case of the Williams House, the setting serves to enhance the "beauty of design."

The house is approached from the south by a gravelled drive of about 100 yards, flanked by English trees. The drive ends in a spacious courtyard, in which a large, sweeping-branched tree is the dominant feature. From here one goes over a large forecourt on which large tubs of hydrangeas, in their season, give a warm touch of colour to this aspect of the house. To the east and west are wings, and the view to the north is over the well-kept lawns to the stream.<sup>37</sup>

In front of the north wall lay a paved terrace. As so often happens with Helmore and Cotterill's domestic designs, access to the house from the garden front is provided by a series of french doors. Situated at regular intervals along the terrace were "small orange

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36. *Ibid.*

37. *Ibid.*

trees."<sup>38</sup> The arrangement was enriched by a wide border of lavender and catmint. The sense of order and refinement is reinforced by the placement of a formal rose garden on the east side of the house.

Towards the end of the 1920s, Helmore and Cotterill began to show an interest in concrete construction. Prior to this date, they had used the material mainly for foundations and internal buttressing of the walls. Usually it would be hidden from view by bricks. The first indication of a change in attitude occurred with the Cook and Ross Building (1927). Instead of stone for the rusticated base the architects used concrete. Another building which utilizes this material was the W.G.V. Fernie House (Fig.48). Here a cement facing was now applied to the brick wall. Cecil Wood, who had used a similar technique at Bishopscourt, may have influenced the architects to adopt this method. In addition, Helmore and Cotterill may have been conversant with some of the houses by J.W. Chapman-Taylor (1878-1958), a New Zealand architect who had close ties with the Arts and Crafts movement in England. Concrete, he found, was more suitable than timber. "It has been considered ugly," he wrote, "but I believe it can be made beautiful. It is fire-, rot-, draught-, dust- and earthquake-proof. As long the earth stays under it, this house will stand."<sup>39</sup> It is unlikely that Helmore and Cotterill agreed entirely with this approach as they did not use their material as extensively. In general, the concrete walls of Chapman-Taylor's buildings tend to be thicker and more monolithic.

The style of the Fernie House is quite different from any of the buildings by Wood or Chapman-Taylor. The exterior on the garden front is reminiscent of the block of flats designed by Lanchester, Rickards, and Lucas (Fig.6).<sup>40</sup> In both examples the gables and windows are relatively small. Interest is created by the prominent overhanging eaves which appear to smother the openings on the upper level. To a

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38. *Ibid.*

39. J. Siers, "J.W. Chapman-Taylor, Architect, 1878-1958", *Journal of the New Zealand Institute of Architects*, XXXV, April 1968, p.111.

40. For a discussion of these buildings refer back to Chapter I.

lesser degree, this element is to be found in the cottages at the First Garden City, Letchworth, Hertfordshire by Lucas. Helmore and Cotterill also employ casement windows, a feature which is discernible in the block of flats. It is perhaps no accident that the Fernie House was described as being designed in the "English country style."<sup>41</sup>

An attribute common to a number of Helmore and Cotterill's houses is the use of flanking wings. Customarily, they are placed on either the main entrance front or on the garden side. If it is the latter, a paved terrace will often be placed in the middle. The rooms typically function as sun porches or living areas. If, on the other hand, they are projected towards the road, their role will be more utilitarian. With the Fernie House the space on the right serves as a garage, the one on the left as the kitchen quarters (Fig.49). Exactly the same is used for K. Ballantyne's house in 1933. Such techniques can enliven the façade (Fig.50). In the case of the Fernie House, the flanking wings and central doorway are juxtaposed with the asymmetrical fenestration. This combination seems to have some bearing on the placement of the chimney tops. By positioning two on one side of the roof, each in line with the projecting roofs, and the third on the other side but situated in the middle of the roof, the architects create a subtle play of receding and protruding spaces.

By their standards, the interior decoration was very plain. This might be connected to the fact that they have used white cement for the exterior. In the sitting hall, which is situated on the ground floor and behind the entrance porch, one would normally expect to find wooden panelling and moulded cornices. Instead, the architects covered the walls with rough textured plaster. In keeping with the simple, almost austere handling, the fireplace was plainly rendered. Above the mantelpiece was a large and prominent hood. The sense of weightiness and strength was reinforced by the exposed timber beams which support the ceiling. A touch of lightness and contrast, however, was provided by the wrought iron balustrade and light fittings (Fig.51). The shapes echo the small serpentine motif below the mantelshelf of the fireplace. The

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41. "English country style in Christchurch," *Home and Building*, V, December 1940, pp.6-7.

whole effect has been likened to a "free version of the Californian Spanish style."<sup>42</sup> Clearly Helmore and Cotterill saw no conflict in placing such motifs in an "English Country style" house. Their primary aim, it appears, was to create a building which was pleasing to look at and comfortable to live in.

During this period the architects were occupied with the design of a large clubhouse for the Christchurch Golf Club (Figs.52-53). The walls are made of brick and were laid in stretcher bond. Stylistically, the clubhouse is made up of an assortment of elements. According to Bowman, the hipped dormer windows on the garden front are derived from "English cottage" designs; the porch with its tuscan columns is classically inspired; and the gable ends with bay windows are a "modernised" interpretation of the Georgian style.<sup>43</sup> What seems to hold the composition together is the symmetrical disposition of the façade and the emphasis on horizontality. The all enveloping roof spreads out in many directions. Like that of the MacDonald House, it binds the projecting wings to the main block.

The multi-faceted character of the Christchurch Golf Club suggests Helmore and Cotterill were inspired by a variety of sources. They may have been conversant, for example, with the Club House, Hampstead Garden Suburb, London (Fig.54) by Parker and Unwin, A.J. Plenty and C. Wade. It too was built of brick and capped by an imposing shingle roof. The block-like massing of the shapes is another prefiguration. Most of the walls were plain and rectilinear. The broad and expansive outlines of the Christchurch Golf Club, however, may owe more to the work of McKim, Mead, and White than to Parker and Unwin. Their design for the Germantown Cricket Club (Fig.55), Germantown, Philadelphia, for example, evinces similar qualities.<sup>44</sup> The organisation of the façade on the garden front into three units also presages Helmore and Cotterill's design. Situated in the centre is the loggia. At either side are the wings.

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42. *Ibid.* p.7.

43. Bowman, answer to a questionnaire, October 1988.

44. An illustration of the Germantown Cricket Club is to be found in *A Monograph of McKim, Mead, and White. 1879-1915*. Plate 24.

The similarities are even more telling when one compares the plans of both buildings. Like the Germantown Cricket Club (Fig.56), the Christchurch Golf Club (Fig.57) is shaped like an "H." Though the internal organization is different, the main rooms of each building follow a symmetrical layout.

By the end of the decade Helmore and Cotterill had developed a vocabulary which could range from American Colonial to English Neo-Georgian. Both architects displayed an adept knowledge of these styles and were always careful in adhering to the rules. During the 1930s, however, they were forced to inject even more variety into their work and to take extra risks. The economic depression, triggered by the Wall Street stockmarket crash in October 1929, pushed many of their colleagues to the edge of bankruptcy. No longer, it seems, could an architect safely work amongst a select group of styles and for an exclusive group of clients. If he was to survive and prosper, it was necessary to pursue as many different approaches as possible. To complicate matters, architects were also forced to grapple with the Modern Movement which was beginning to make inroads in New Zealand. Though it took some time to establish itself in the country, the new style of the twentieth-century was to have a significant impact on the work of Helmore and Cotterill.

## CHAPTER III

### THE 1930s: ADJUSTMENT AND CONSOLIDATION

During the 1930s Helmore and Cotterill underwent a change of direction. A cursory glance at their work from this period reveals a greater variety of approaches. Not only do they look back to Georgian and American colonial precedents, they also begin to cast an eye towards the Modern Movement. To be sure, there are elements in each design which reflect long standing concerns. Most reveal a keen interest in symmetry. This applies not only to the organization of the massing, but also the fenestration and the placement of the doors and chimneys. Their treatment of the plan also remained relatively constant. In the majority of cases it echoed the symmetrical disposition of the façade. In hindsight, the period led to some of Helmore and Cotterill's most exciting and provocative work. By 1939, when the war forced them to curb their output, they were widely regarded as one of New Zealand's leading architectural partnerships.

Helmore and Cotterill's use of a wide selection of styles reflected the general tenor of the times. Though many architects showed an interest in Modernism and were prepared to experiment with it, there was no whole-hearted commitment to the movement. Not until after the Second World War were architects like Paul Pascoe and Vernon Brown fully able to explore and develop the style in New Zealand. For most people in the 1930s, Modernism was just one of a number of styles that an architect could use. Very much in keeping with this attitude was an article written by C.R. Knight. It was entitled "The Architectural Club of Architectural Design" and advocated an open-minded approach to questions of style.

I believe the fundamentals of all schools of architectural design are the same; namely the solving of a practical need in as agreeable a manner as possible. There can be no

difference of opinion on this. It is then merely a matter of dress - the manner in which the building is treated - that causes all the bother. And who shall be bold enough to declare that one mode of dress is suitable for all occasions? Not I, because I am sure it is largely governed by conditions. There are circumstances which dictate a radical treatment, others where strict conservation is imperative. When the designer offends under these conditions he deserves all the criticism he gets, but in the great majority of cases dress is clearly optional and in such cases quibbling about it is silly.<sup>1</sup>

As he saw it, there should be accommodation for all schools of thought. Styles, he claimed, were like members of a club. Despite their individual differences, they had to learn to get along and coexist.

Another factor which had a bearing on the development of architecture during the 1930s was the depression. It began in 1929 and lasted well into the next decade. Like many other New Zealand architects, Helmore and Cotterill were confronted with the real possibility of closure. There were fewer clients to be shared and the commissions were not nearly so lucrative. In Christchurch the number of permits issued for the year 1928-29 stood at 868,983. In contrast, the number issued for 1932-33 was 153,519.<sup>2</sup> Because of the downturn, some architects elected to work for the Government.<sup>3</sup> By 1934 the situation had become so difficult that a few of them either chose not to or were unable to pay their subscriptions to the N.Z.I.A. Among those who neglected to pay were B.J. Ager, H.F. Willis, and E.H. England. England, for example, owed £23.6.2. to the association. According to one report, he was doing very little work at this time. As such, the Canterbury Branch of the N.Z.I.A. requested "that reasonable

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1. C.R. Knight, "The International Club of Architectural Design," *Home and Building*, I, July-September 1937, p.22.

2. *New Zealand Statistical Report on Population and Buildings for the year 1932-33*. Wellington, 1933, p.23.

3. A case in point is L.R. Lovell-Smith. I am indebted to his son, Brian Lovell-Smith, for providing this information.

leniency be shewn."<sup>4</sup> In such a climate, it was obvious that an architect needed to be flexible in order to attract as many clients as possible.

Although their predicament was not as serious, it is clear that the first two years of the new decade cannot have been easy for Helmore and Cotterill. An examination of the commissions they received in 1930 and 1931 indicates a substantial drop in the rate of work. From what is known, only two houses were designed by the pair during this period.<sup>5</sup> Additions and alterations, which would normally provide a steady source of income, had also decreased. Only two were received in this time.<sup>6</sup>

The firm was saved from serious trouble by the commission for the new Lodge (Fig.58) at Hanmer Springs (1930-32). Although they were not designing a complete building (old parts of the "Lodge" were connected to the new block), the project was larger in scope than any other work so far undertaken by the architects. Their brief was to design a two storey annex with 57 bedrooms and space for at least 180 guests in the main dining room. No expense, it appears, was spared in providing modern amenities. The kitchen was fitted out with a large salamander range and steam unit. "The appointments," according to one report, were "the last word in convenience."<sup>7</sup> Similarly, a combined heating and generating electrical plant was installed in the lower basement, one of the first of its kind in New Zealand.<sup>8</sup>

Another notable quality was the extensive use of reinforced concrete. In the wake of the recent earthquake in the Hawke's Bay, there was an understandable desire at the time to construct buildings which could resist severe tremors. Indeed, in a report prepared by a special committee of the N.Z.I.A. on the modification of existing

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4. *Minutes*, 18 August 1933. Canterbury Branch of the N.Z.I.A., Christchurch, p.115.

5. See the house for B.J.Todd, JH 454, CM 1899 and the Wood House, JH 490, CM 1920. Pictorial Archives, Canterbury Museum, Christchurch.

6. See JH 454a, CM 1900 and JH 356, CM 1604. Pictorial Archives, Canterbury Museum, Christchurch.

7. "The New Lodge at Hanmer: A Palatial Building, Spanish Architecture followed," *The Christchurch Times*, 20 January 1932, p.7.

8. *Ibid.*



structural systems, it was noted "that buildings of good reinforced concrete frame and steel frame construction [in the Hawke's Bay] resisted shock with remarkable success."<sup>9</sup> Helmore and Cotterill seem to have fully absorbed the lessons of the disaster. In 1932 a review detailing the progress of the "Lodge" appeared in the *Christchurch Times*. The article was quick to register the solid framework of the building. "The reinforcement," it said, "is up to the standard required in the concentration of concrete buildings in the cities, having regard to risks from earthquakes."<sup>10</sup>

The style of the building is clearly indebted to Spanish Mission prototypes found in the western states of the United States. Certainly Helmore and Cotterill would have known that Spanish Mission was an appropriate style for concrete building. In the 1920s and 30s the majority of these buildings were constructed of this material. Since 1905 numerous articles had appeared in American journals which highlighted the advantages of concrete. In 1906, for example, the *American Builders Review* stated: "it is the increasing use of plaster and cement as a surfacing material in America that has called the attention of our designers to these mission buildings in the far west."<sup>11</sup> Books also began to deal with this topic. In *The Concrete House and Its Construction* (Philadelphia, 1912) the author, Maurice Sloan, noted: "If there is one style of architecture with which monolithic concrete construction fits better than another, it is the Californian or Mexican 'Mission,' as expressed in the low rambling buildings with the deep recessed porches and Spanish tiled roofs so favorably known and extensively used in California."<sup>12</sup> Bowman has suggested that Helmore and Cotterill may have picked up the approach from such sources. During the 1930s, for instance, architectural magazines came not only from the United Kingdom, but also from America.<sup>13</sup>

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9. "Earthquakes, Building to resist shock, report by Institute of Architects," *Press*, 12 October 1931, p.9.

10. *The Christchurch Times*

11. See K.J. Weitze, *Californias' Mission Revival*. Santa Monica, 1984, p.120.

12. *Ibid.* p.127.

13. Bowman, answer to a questionnaire, October 1988.

There is some evidence, however, to support the view that Helmore actually had the opportunity of seeing the buildings *in situ*. Amongst the architect's collection of black and white photographs was a Christmas card from "Bunny and Willie Bruce."<sup>14</sup> It is addressed 701 North Alpine Drive, Beverley Hills, California and dated 1936. Inside are two photographs, presumably of Mr. and Mrs. Bruce's house (Fig.59). Though it post-dates the "Lodge" by 4 years, it is conceivable that Helmore had stopped by on earlier occasions. Towards the end of 1927, for instance, he made another journey to Europe.<sup>15</sup> On his way back, he may have docked at San Francisco or one of the other ports along the west coast and visited his friends.

The Bruce House would not have been the only building based on Spanish Mission antecedents which were familiar to Helmore. In all likelihood, he was conversant with many other structures of this type. Between 1880 and 1920 a number of hotels and large houses, which took Spanish models as their main source of inspiration, were built in California and Florida. Notable examples include the Ponce de Leon Hotel (1887) in St. Augustine, Florida by John Carrère (1858-1911) and Thomas Hastings (1860-1929), and Vizcaya (Fig.60), the Dealing estate in Miami (1914-16) by F.Burrell Hoffmann, Jr. (b.1884). For Helmore and Cotterill, it would have seemed logical to employ a similar approach. The style of building is evocative of outdoor living and warm temperatures, qualities which most hotels seek to promote.

In any analysis of these building types, it is important to note that there are many stylistic permutations. Some buildings are very loosely based on Spanish originals. Others are more rigidly defined. For our purposes, it is useful to survey the salient stylistic groupings. According to J.G. Blumenson, there are three varieties of Spanish Mission Revival architecture.<sup>16</sup> The first is the Mission style and took place between 1890 and 1920. In general, the forms are plain and severe. Openings are created in the

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14. See the box of photographs held by Pictorial Archives, Canterbury Museum, Christchurch.

15. See the *Minutes*, 30 November 1927. Canterbury Branch of the N.Z.I.A., Christchurch.

16. See J.G. Blumenson, *Identifying American Architecture*. Nashville, 1977, p.5.

walls by round arches mounted on piers. The roofs are red-tiled. If the building is substantial, features like towers, curvilinear gables, and small balconies are incorporated into the composition. It was an influential style. Examples of it are to be found not only in California but also in Washington, D.C.<sup>17</sup> Perhaps the best known Mission style building in New Zealand is Auckland Grammar School (1916) by R. Atkinson Abbot. The second revival style is the Pueblo style (1905-1940). It is simpler than the Mission style. Common features are flat roofs, *vigas* (exposed rafters), and rounded corners. Unlike its cousin, the style did not spread very far and is mainly limited to the southwestern regions of the United States.<sup>18</sup> The third revival style is Spanish Colonial Revival (1915-1940). It is more ornate than the other two categories. Arches, columns, window surrounds, cornices, and parapets are often enriched by low-relief carvings. Windows may be straight or arched. Another feature is the use of iron window grilles and balconies. For large scale buildings, as with the Mission style, a symbolic bell tower is sometimes added.<sup>19</sup>

Many of the qualities associated with the last heading, the Spanish Colonial Revival style, are germane to the "Lodge." The tower, which is located on the east side, had a moulded cornice (Fig.61). At a glance, one might easily conclude that the it had been extrapolated from a Florida setting. Another characteristic element was the mixture of straight and arched windows. In keeping with the baroque nature of the style, certain sections of the iron window surrounds and balconies were embellished with ornate patterns.

In some respects, the "Lodge" is very similar to the Arden Lodge in Havelock North (1926). The latter was designed by W.H. Gummer and is considered by some to be one of his finest creations (Fig.62).<sup>20</sup> Though portions of the building recall the Art

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17. *Ibid.*

18. *Ibid.*, p.7.

19. *Ibid.*, p.9.

20. I am indebted to Tom and Pam Donnelly, present owners of the Arden Lodge, for supplying details about this building.

Deco style, other parts seem to be more in tune with Spanish models. The arched openings, the extensive use of sheltered balconies, and the curvilinear treatment of the corner walls, allude to a Spanish source. Like the "Lodge," the exterior of the Arden Lodge is pale in colour. The walls, moreover, are plain and crisply rendered. It is yet to be proved whether Helmore and Cotterill had any knowledge of Gummer's design. At best, one can assume that the understanding of Spanish Mission architecture, was widespread amongst New Zealand architects during the late 1920s and early 1930s.<sup>21</sup>

In other areas, though, the "Lodge" does not conform to Spanish Colonial precedents. A notable departure from tradition is the treatment of the plan (Fig.63). Instead of rectangular massing, it takes the shape of a butterfly, a motif commonly linked to the Arts and Crafts movement.<sup>22</sup> Helmore and Cotterill's willingness to mix two seemingly disparate approaches suggests a desire on their part to experiment with the style. This was not an isolated incidence. Both the MacEwen House and the Fernie House are indebted to a variety of sources. There may have been a number of reasons why they adopted such a course. Helmore, for example, could have been influenced by Lutyens. The English architect was widely admired for his ability "to bring pieces as diverse as a farmhouse chimney and a Corinthian pilaster into play in the same game."<sup>23</sup> With regard to the "Lodge," there may have been a more mundane reason. Most people associate Spanish Mission architecture with sunny and warm conditions. It was only logical, therefore, that the "Lodge" be designed to catch as much light as possible. Apart from creating a great deal of variety in the composition, a butterfly plan is extremely effective in providing a sun-trap.

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21. In Christchurch, one year before Helmore and Cotterill began work on the "Lodge," H.F. Willis drew up plans for a whole street (New Regent Street) of shops and small offices. Like the "Lodge" these buildings are of concrete and recall Spanish Mission prototypes.

22. For an account of butterfly plans and their impact on Arts and Crafts houses see J. Franklin, "Edwardian Butterfly Houses," *Architectural Review*, CLVII, April 1975, pp.220-225.

23. H.S. Goodhart-Rendel, "The Work of the Late Sir Edwin Lutyens, OM," *Architect and Building News*, CLXXXI, 1945, p.110.

The rooms on the ground floor can be divided into three main groups. The first contains the kitchen, basement, and staff quarters. They were located on the south side and received the least sunlight. The middle group was devoted to recreation. The principal apartments were the smoking room, the lounge, and the dining room. The largest was the dining room and measured 22 metres by 10 metres. Slightly smaller in size was the lounge. A feature of this room was the heavily beamed ceiling. Adjoining it and the smoking room was a sun porch (Fig.58). This space faced the west and was distinguished by four glassed arches. The floor was laid in polished timber and the ceiling was barrel shaped. The third group provided the main entrances and served to connect the old portions of the "Lodge" with the new additions. Also situated on the western side was a *porte-cochère* and the entrance porch. Behind these spaces lay the reception hall. As with the lounge, it featured a heavily beamed ceiling. The front entrance was located on the other side. It was dominated by a loggia which measured 13.10 metres in length. It had five arches and a red-tiled floor. A link was formed between it and other parts of the east façade by a long terrace paved in concrete.

The upper floor was less complex in organization and contained most of the guest accommodation. Each room was fitted with a basin, "built-in wardrobe and shaving cabinet, radiator and two lights, a pendant over dressing table and a reading lamp."<sup>24</sup> The wings were connected together by a central corridor. In the main block it provided access to the drawing room and balcony overhanging the *porte-cochère*.

The resort did not go unnoticed by Helmore and Cotterill's contemporaries. In one account, it was described as "a palatial building."<sup>25</sup> At the time it must have seemed extremely bold and courageous to construct a health resort of this size in a region which was experiencing severe economic problems. A number of Canterbury architects also admired the "Lodge." In August 1932 they invited the duo to submit drawings and photographs of it and the Christchurch Golf Club House for the N.Z.I.A.

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24. *The Christchurch Times*.

25. *Ibid*.

Gold Medal.<sup>26</sup> Though flattered by the request, the architects decided to forego the opportunity, at least for a couple of years. The principle reason was that the gardens had not been fully landscaped.<sup>27</sup> This was the closest they ever got to receiving a gold medal in the 1930s as their names never cropped up again amongst the list of contenders.

In spite of their success, Helmore and Cotterill appear to have avoided any further references to the Spanish Mission style. None of their subsequent house designs embody the same qualities as the "Lodge." Perhaps one side-effect, though, was a freer and more loose interpretation of specific stylistic categories. Prior to the "Lodge," they were erecting buildings like the B.J. Todd House (Fig.64). In style, it is almost identical to the Pinckney House. As we have seen, the latter example faithfully patterns itself on the simplified Wren-Baroque houses found on the east coast of the United States. By 1932 they were gradually moving away from such models and adopting a more cosmopolitan approach.

An early example is the Doctor's Consulting Rooms (1932) in Palmerston North (Fig.65). At first glance, the building seems to be directly based on American colonial precedents. The central entrance is relatively ornate, most of the windows have louvered shutters, and the walls are weatherboarded. In keeping with the style, the architects employ sash windows. Some of the features, however, appear to be derived from other models. The proportions of the building are very similar to those of the Langlois-Etevenaux Cottage (c.1845) in Akaroa (Fig.66). In both instances, a narrow gap separates the window hoods and the edge of the roof. The connection is further underlined by the transom in the doorway of each building, the flared eaves, and the positioning of the wooden pilasters around the entrance and windows.

The Doctor's Consulting Rooms is unusual in that it is the only timber building by Helmore and Cotterill which seems to appropriate a large amount of motifs from a genuine New Zealand colonial type. That said, it is difficult to determine how

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26. *Minutes*, 26 August 1932. Canterbury Branch of the N.Z.I.A., Christchurch.

27. *Ibid.*

serious they were in drawing a connection between their work and the early architecture of New Zealand. In view of their extensive use of American Colonial models discussed in Chapter II, it was probably the form and not the association which influenced them. By looking at a greater range of buildings, Helmore and Cotterill effectively diminish their dependence on any one particular type of source.

It would be wrong to assume that the mingling of stylistic elements resulted in a loss of unity and identity. With buildings like the Doctor's Consulting Rooms, it is obvious that a sense of homogeneity prevails. In many respects, borrowings from designs such as the Langlois-Etevenaux Cottage are complementary and give character to the building. The same is also true with the Seay House (Fig.67) at 54 Glandovey Road, Christchurch (1932). Though the style is ostensibly Colonial Georgian, many contemporary observers were struck by the French character of the house. In 1935, for instance, an article in the *Press* described the building as "the only example of French Colonial architecture in the city."<sup>28</sup> This impression, it seems, is conveyed by the pronounced gables, the high-pitched roof, and the whitewashed brick wall separating the main entrance from the kitchen. Indeed, it led one anonymous reviewer in the *New Zealand Woman's Weekly* to state that the brick wall "asks for sunlight, for geese and white pigeons, and a Provencal sky. It also asks you to believe that, behind it, stretches not a Fendalton garden, but precisely the sort of chessboard farming country which you last saw in your French book to illustrate 'où est le fermier? Le fermier est dans le champ.'"<sup>29</sup> Part of the charm may also have to do with the turquoise blue shutters and the dark brown shingles on the roof. The house was set on a commodious section. It was reached by a wide gravelled drive, approximately 64 metres long, and screened from the road by a row of poplar trees. Situated between the trees and the house was a spacious lawn. Such captivating surroundings may explain why the architects have included so many picturesque elements into the composition.

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28. "A Distinctive Home: Unusual Architecture in Fendalton, Residence of Mr and Mrs Ivan Seay, the Charm of the Period," *Press*, 21 March 1935, p.5.

29. "Georgian Architecture: the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ivan Seay at Fendalton," *The New Zealand Woman's Weekly*, 1 February 1934, p.6.

The picturesque effect is complemented by the more formal aspects of Georgian design (Fig.68). Features like the semi-circular portico and the sash windows lend a classical air to the work. The symmetrical elevation of the entrance front adds an extra note of restraint. Parts of the building echo some of Helmore and Cotterill's earlier designs. The entrance front incorporates a balcony, a feature which is also used at "Four Peaks" and "Fernside." This device, however, is purely ornamental as it is extremely unlikely that a person would want to climb out of a window and stand on the ledge. Another repeated motif is the subtle interplay between the dormer windows and the deeply overhanging eaves. As with the Fernie House, the juxtaposition of these forms can lead to striking contrasts of light and shade.

The interior decoration of the Seay House varied quite markedly. Some rooms were relatively plain while others were extremely ornate. The central hallway on the ground floor, for instance, was almost completely painted in white. The effect was relieved only by a bright plaque and some black and white etchings. The doors were made of polished Queensland maple and the glass door handles were amber-coloured. In contrast, the sitting room was noted for its decoration, particularly the rich array of furniture. In addition to a polished walnut sofa-table modelled in the Sheraton style, the room included a "Queen Anne polished walnut writing-desk and a Georgian mahogany library-table, with a deep circular top round which drawers are set."<sup>30</sup> Given the fact that Helmore had a strong interest in these types of furniture, it is reasonable to assume that he had some control over their selection.<sup>31</sup>

Another interesting area was the dining room (Fig.69). According to contemporary accounts, it was simply furnished, though the style was ostensibly Georgian. The centre-piece was the fireplace. It was distinguished by a green marble surround and a bolection moulding. On either side stood a recess. For the walls, a glazed parchment "golden in colour" was used. The carpet was made up of tangerine,

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30. "A Distinctive Home."

31. In order to gauge the extent of Helmore's interest in Georgian furniture see Appendix C.



blue, and gold, and the curtains were cast in a deep blue.<sup>32</sup> Colours of this type tend to have an effect on the viewer's perception of space. If strong reds or browns are used, then the walls would appear to advance. Conversely, if pastel shades or cool blues and greens are employed, the opposite would occur. Bearing in mind that space in the Seay House is very tightly organized, it is easy to understand why such cool and pale tones were chosen. This may also explain why the hall, which is long and narrow, was painted largely in white. Any other type of arrangement may have engendered a more claustrophobic feeling.

Equally well known, if only because it is the official residence of the Prime Minister of New Zealand, is Vogel House (Figs.70-71). It was built in the same year as the Seay House and exhibits many similar qualities. The roofs are steeply-pitched, it is clad in weatherboards, and is asymmetrical in massing. Again, Helmore and Cotterill have employed deeply overhanging eaves, creating interesting spatial effects with the walls, dormer windows and roof. A rare sketch, presumably executed by Helmore, highlights the architects' interest in such matters (Fig.72). It was probably prepared at an early stage of the design process since parts of the gables on the dormer windows and the living room differ from the drawings used to build the house (Fig.74).<sup>33</sup> Despite the fact that a number of additions have been made over the years, notably the addition of a room on the west side and a *porte-cochère* at the main entrance, the house has retained much of its original character. Moreover, because the site has not been subdivided into smaller blocks of land, one is able to view the house and surrounding area in much the same way as James Vogel did in 1932 (Fig.73).

Aspects of the original plan (Fig.74) are also reminiscent of the Seay House (Fig.75). In both houses the largest room on the ground floor was the living room. It was connected to other parts of the house by a central corridor. The three remaining living areas - the dining room, kitchen, and study - were almost equal in size. Moreover,

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32. *Ibid.*

33. It is worth noting that a number of additions have been made to the house, though with great taste and care. Compare the original design (Fig.17) with recent photographs of the building (Figs.13-14, 16).

the rooms on the garden front are not nearly so formal in disposition as the rooms on the entrance front. This is a recurring feature in many of Helmore and Cotterill's L-shaped plans.

Certain aspects of the Vogel House plan, however, do not exactly mirror the plan of the Seay House. The formal arrangement of the rooms at the front entrance are more akin to the front entrance rooms found at the Fernie House. Here, the main doorway is flanked by projecting wings. On one side the architects placed the garage. The other side contained the kitchen and washing quarters.

The motif reappeared in many of Helmore and Cotterill's house designs, especially when the main façade was orientated towards the south. It figures not only in their "English Country" and "French Colonial" houses, but also modernist buildings like Coldstream Lodge (Figs.76-77). This house is one of Helmore and Cotterill's most unusual creations and stands out from the rest of their *oeuvre*. Some of the features appear to be directly plucked from a copybook on the International Style. In addition to a flat roof, the house possessed a white concrete exterior and cantilevered balconies. For its time, the building must have seemed quite radical. The familiar placement of the garage and the kitchen quarters at either side of the entrance front, however, would have struck a reassuring note and suggested that the architects had not completely turned their backs on their earlier work.

Despite the modernity of the exterior, Coldstream Lodge is relatively conservative. The architects, for example, do not adopt an open-plan and allow rooms to merge into one another. Such a feature was a keystone of the Modern Movement and serves to highlight the gap between Helmore and Cotterill and European modernists like Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe or, for that matter, New Zealand architects of a later generation known as the Group who actively promoted the concept.<sup>34</sup> As is the case with their American Colonial designs, the partners were more interested in the form than the literal ideals of the movement.

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34. For a discussion of The Group see D. Mitchell and G. Chaplin, *The Elegant Shed: New Zealand Architecture since 1945*. Auckland, 1984, pp.31-35.

The conservatism of Helmore and Cotterill's planning is perhaps best underscored by a comparison of their work with some of Lutyens's buildings. At an elemental level, it is easy to detect one or two parallels between these architects. A common motif is the stationing of an object at the crossing of the main axis. In the case of Coldstream Lodge or "Four Peaks," the centre spot is occupied by a stair (Fig.78). Allan Greenberg has detected a similar approach in Lutyens's work.<sup>35</sup> At Heathcote a fireplace is positioned in the middle of the plan while at little Thakeham (1902) there is a wall. More often than not, this central area is surrounded by the main rooms. This is as far as it goes. Helmore and Cotterill, for instance, elected not to follow Lutyens's predilection for circumambulatory passageways. Most of the rooms in their house designs are linked together by a straight corridor which in turn is connected to the entrance front. By contrast, Lutyens allows for a variety of corridors which travel in and around the main axis. Another difference is the treatment of space. A feature of the English architect's work is the diversity of ceiling heights. At little Thakeham nearly every room is handled differently. The hall has 5.5 metre ceilings, the porch and corridor 2.43 metres, the space behind the stairs 2.23 metres, and the drawing and dining room 3.66 metres.<sup>36</sup> In comparison, Coldstream Lodge has only two standard levels; 3.1 metres for the ground floor and 2.5 metres for the first floor.

According to Bowman, the owner of Coldstream Lodge, K. Ballantyne, may have exerted some influence on the choice of style.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, he is sure that the entrance front was a "direct copy" of a house built in England during the early 1930s. Although no documentation has yet been uncovered to support this claim, it is clear that certain aspects of Coldstream Lodge are derived from British sources. The window panels above the main entrance, for instance, are almost identical to those used by Peter Behrens (1868-1940) in the design of "New Ways" (Fig.79), Northampton (1926). Even the vertical projections atop the glass panes are strikingly similar.

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35. A. Greenberg, "Lutyens' Architecture Restudied," *Perspecta*, XII, 1969, p.129.

36. *Ibid.* p.130.

37. Bowman, answer to a questionnaire, October 1988.

The chevron patterns on the central door and around some of the windows and projecting ledges also seem to be indebted to English models. The motif was popular with many architects and can be traced back to the work of Edgar Wood. In his design for a group of shops (Fig.80) in Middleton (1908), he placed a panel of tiles above the ground floor windows. They were coloured green and white and patterned to resemble chevrons. The modernity of the work was such that some observers have associated the shops with the 1930s. In later works like the Royd House (Fig.81), Hale, Cheshire (1914-16) the effect becomes more exaggerated.

Another building which appears to be linked to Coldstream Lodge is "Castanea" (c.1930-32), a house located in Bickley, Cheshire (Fig.82). In this instance, the architect was not Edgar Wood but P.D. Hepworth. Significantly, "Castanea" was located in the same county as the Royd House. The chevrons on the main entrance of the former building and at Coldstream Lodge were virtually indistinguishable. The patterns were about the same thickness and shape. It is also worth noting that some of the window hoods and projecting ledges at "Castanea" were faced with smaller chevrons. A similar approach was tried by Helmore and Cotterill, especially around the base of the front balcony and the ledge on the north-east elevation.<sup>38</sup> The fact that each building had a white exterior finish, wrought iron railings, and casement windows, suggest that Helmore and Cotterill were very familiar with the latest developments abroad.

The plain and emphatic lines of Coldstream Lodge, reinforced principally by the cubic massing of the concrete walls, also indicate that Helmore and Cotterill had some knowledge of Irving Gill's (1870-1936) work. This American architect had started

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38. Although Helmore and Cotterill drew up the plans of Coldstream Lodge in 1933, it was not completed until 1935 (See "How to enjoy an onstage spa in Fendalton," *The Dominion Sunday Times*, 5 February 1989, p.27.). In the interim they may have seen an illustration of "Castanea" in *Architecture Illustrated*, IX, November 1934, p.xxi. Whether it directly influenced Helmore and Cotterill is still uncertain. In 1933 Basil Smyth, an assistant in Helmore and Cotterill's office, executed a watercolour sketch of Coldstream Lodge (Fig.19). Like "Castanea," the sketch includes the distinctive chevron motif. One possibility, therefore, is that the architects knew about "Castanea" before it appeared in *Architecture Illustrated*. Alternatively, they may have seen another design which incorporated similar features.

off by working in the Shingle Style but towards the end of World War One had increasingly adopted a more refined and distilled approach. His finest work is the Walter L. Dodge House (Fig.83) in Los Angeles and conveys similar qualities to Coldstream Lodge. Both are block-like in shape, the roof is hidden from view, and the walls are of concrete. Helmore and Cotterill may have known about Gill's work through their study of Spanish Mission architecture. Gill was greatly attracted to it and had praised the "Missions of California" for their "extreme simplicity" and their ability to make "an indelible impression of power and repose."<sup>39</sup> His design for the Bishop's School for Girls, La Jolla (1909), which is built of reinforced concrete and characterised by pure surfaces, incorporates such Spanish Mission features as rows of arcades and a bell tower. Given that Helmore and Cotterill had pursued a similar approach with the "Lodge," it seems likely that the connection between them and Gill was more than coincidental.

In spite of its indebtedness to so many foreign models, it is apparent that Coldstream Lodge occupies an important place in New Zealand architecture. Without a doubt it is the first Modern Movement house to be built in the country. The building is all the more remarkable when one realizes that it pre-dates the Cintra flats (Fig.84) in Auckland by four years. These flats were designed by Horace Massey and are generally considered to be the first group of modernist buildings to be constructed in New Zealand.<sup>40</sup> As with Coldstream Lodge, the Cintra flats have metal framed windows and in some places the corners of the walls are curved. Clearly Helmore and Cotterill did not always seek to follow a traditional approach. In buildings like Coldstream Lodge, they demonstrated that they were capable of branching out in very new directions.

By now it should be reasonably clear that Helmore and Cotterill were not doctrinaire in their approach towards architecture. Though they were quick to assimilate the basic lessons of the Modern Movement, they did not shut the door on the

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39. See Weitze, p.116.

40. See I.J. Lochhead, "New Zealand Architecture in the Thirties: The Impact of Modernism," *Landfall*, CLII, 1984, p.473. See also *Home and Building*, October-December 1936, p.19.

more traditional methods. Essentially, the architects chose a middle path, sometimes making the odd detour, as it were, but never straying too far from the prescribed route. It is difficult to imagine, therefore, that they would have admired the stark purity and austere handling of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's (1886-1969) work. His design of the Villa Tugendhat (1930), for instance, is unlikely to have attracted them. The open-plan and absence of decoration would have been too radical for their tastes. It is questionable too whether any of their clients were prepared to endorse this approach. Helmore and Cotterill, who were sensitive about such matters, always placed practical considerations ahead of ideals. By the same token, the partners probably did not agree with the reactionary criticisms made in Sir Reginald Blomfield's book *Modernismus* or Lutyens's article for *Country Life* (1931) which was entitled "What I think of Modern Architecture."<sup>41</sup> In the latter case, the writer bemoaned the decline of craftsmanship and criticized the Modern Movement for its lack of "grammar."

These adventurous young men thrill me tremendously and all my sympathies are with them. But good architecture needs more than bright ideas, and by my traditional standards most modern buildings seem to me lack style and cohesion, besides being unfriendly and crude.<sup>42</sup>

Helmore and Cotterill were not alone in attempting to reconcile such differing approaches. Apart from C.R. Knight's article, there also appeared in *Home and Building* a piece on two designs by Massey. Entitled "Versatility in two new Remuera homes," it highlighted the multiplicity of methods that were open to an architect.

To-day the architect, to suit varying conditions designs different, and sometimes complicated, floor-plans and translates them into many different styles. Anything from Elizabethan, Spanish mission, Colonial or Georgian to the latest functional designs may be required of him.<sup>43</sup>

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41. Wood possessed a copy of *Modernismus* and it is likely that Helmore and Cotterill, if they did not already own one, had access to it. See I.J. Lochhead, p.472. Refer also to E.L. Lutyens, "What I think of Modern Architecture," *Country Life*, LXIX, 20 June 1931, p.777.

42. Lutyens.

This is an important statement for it indicates that Helmore and Cotterill's middle-of-the-road approach was closely akin to other New Zealand architects and that they were just as sensitive to what was taking place in their own country as they were about the developments in Europe and America.

Houses were not the only types of buildings that Helmore and Cotterill designed during the early 1930s. In 1933 they were commissioned to make extensive alterations and additions for the First Church of Christ, Scientist.<sup>44</sup> Floor space was to be doubled, ceiling height increased to 7.9 metres, and the length enlarged to 26.2 metres. Extra space was also required for the Sunday School which was situated below the ground floor. At the back of the church a platform was to be built, framed by four columns and set against three arches. The original brick walls were levelled and replaced with white reinforced concrete. Total cost of the building was estimated at £8,000, ranking it as one of the larger church commissions of the depression years.<sup>45</sup>

Like the majority of churches built for the First Church of Christ, Scientist, especially those found in the United States, the architects employed a Neo-Classical design (Fig.85). The frontage is characterised by a substantial prostyle portico with the words "First Church of Christ, Scientist" boldly carved into the entablature.<sup>46</sup> The pediment, distinguished by a sinking tympanum and raking cornice, is no less prominent. The severe, almost stark effect is heightened by the use of the Tuscan order, the simplest of all the orders. The capitals are unadorned, the columns are unfluted, and the bases are plain. What features they have incorporated, namely astragal and ovolo

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43. "Versatility in two Remuera homes," *Home and Building*, I, July-September, 1937, p.9.

44. Although Helmore and Cotterill had strong ties to the Church of England, very few commissions from this body came their way. Without a doubt, the new façade for the First Church of Christ, Scientist was their most important ecclesiastical commission.

45. The original church was built in 1930 and was designed by L.R. Lovell-Smith. Prior to 1933 it was known as the Second Church of Christ, Scientist. It received its status as a branch of the Mother Church, The First Church of Christ, Scientist, Boston, Massachusetts, in November 1925. See "New Church Building, Second Church of Christ, Scientist," *Press*, 10 March 1930, p.9.

46. According to Bowman, "the Portico design was required on all new C.S. Buildings, as it repeated that of the Mother Church." Answer to questionnaire, October, 1988.

moulding, the baguette, the abacus, and the apophyge, are all part of the vocabulary of the Tuscan order. The architect's understanding of this style is not confined simply to details. In comparison with the other orders, the proportions of the Tuscan order are shorter and more compact. Helmore and Cotterill were conscious of this distinction for inside the church where it was necessary to create a sense of lightness and great height, they employed extremely attenuated Corinthian columns (Fig.86).

Testimony of Helmore and Cotterill's interest in interior decoration is their design for the tea-room at the Beath and Co. Building (now known as the Arthur Barnett/D.I.C. Store), Christchurch. It was located on the first floor and reached by a "wide, shallow flight of steps with a marble ramp on each side."<sup>47</sup> The interior was dominated by two colours; for the walls, columns, and pilasters, a "deep but brilliant peacock green" was used; for the mouldings and the highlights gold was employed.<sup>48</sup> A golden polish was also applied to the tables and chairs which were made out of Southland beech. The effect was intensified further by the golden oak parquet floor. In keeping with the ornate setting, the walls were panelled in plaster. Bolection mouldings compartmentalized each panel. The ceiling was also plastered but rendered in an ivory white colour.<sup>49</sup> Two recesses were built into the east wall. In one of them a piano was installed (Fig.87). It was raised on a dais and flanked by two Corinthian columns. A wrought iron railing around the base demarcated the recess from the dining area. Behind the piano was a large gold framed mirror. It was over three and a half metres high and consisted of a series of interlocking panes, the sides of which were bevelled. The sumptuous layout seems to have made a strong impression on Helmore and Cotterill's contemporaries. The effect was such that it led one reviewer to describe the Beath and Company Building as "one of the finest of its kind in the Dominion."<sup>50</sup>

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47. "New Tea Room, Beath and Company Limited, Outstanding Artistry of Design, Comfort for Patrons," *Press*, 4 July 1935, p.7.

48. *Ibid.*

49. *Ibid.*

50. *Ibid.*



At this point it is worth noting the office procedures adopted by Helmore and Cotterill. During the 1930s they shared a suite with R.S.D. Harman in the C.M.L. Building, Cathedral Square, Christchurch. Despite the fact that Harman was never a partner of the firm, he did sometimes collaborate with the two architects.<sup>51</sup> Assistants were also engaged, though the rate of pay does not seem to have been particularly high. In one instance, Helmore and Cotterill allowed the wages of one pupil to be paid by his father.<sup>52</sup> Bowman recalls the work as being very arduous and time-consuming.

The assistant was the first to arrive and worked from 8.30 - 5.00. The principals arrived later and often left earlier. If however drawings were to be sent to the North Island, the assistant was expected to stay if necessary till about 5.30 p.m. when the mail closed. Occasionally he was also expected to work at the weekends if prints were requested for Monday morning and the weather had not been suitably sunny during the week. Tracings were printed on to sensitized paper in the sun then developed in an ammonia box: this meant lugging a heavy frame on to the duck boards over a gutter to the pitched roof, exposing the glazed side for a fixed time then dragging it inside to remove the print in the comparative dark. There was no overtime pay; indeed a great deal more was expected of an assistant than would be tolerated now.<sup>53</sup>

Normally Helmore executed the sketches and had them shown to the client. Once they had been approved, Cotterill proceeded to execute the "working drawings." Helmore also worked out the specifications and took care of the builders. If an assistant had sufficient experience and ability, he was allowed to assist with some of these tasks.<sup>54</sup>

During the mid 1930s the number of flats being built in Christchurch increased quite significantly. According to one estimate, the amount spent in 1936 was almost £50,000. Many owners viewed these types of building as a secure form of

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51. A case in point is the competition for the Christchurch Subsidiary Hospital (1939).

52. Bowman, answer to a questionnaire, October 1988.

53. *Ibid.*

54. *Ibid.*

investment. Concomitantly, flat seekers of the period were demanding higher standards of comfort from landlords. In many cases an architect was engaged in order that the buildings would "be attractive to the most exacting tenant."<sup>55</sup>

One of the largest projects is by Helmore and Cotterill. The building is known as Victoria Mansions and situated at the corner of Montreal, Salisbury, and Victoria Streets (Fig.88). Because the site prevents the structure from being eclipsed by other buildings, the architects did not have to worry about the amount of sunshine reaching the façade. The main front faces the north while the other two exposed sides are orientated towards the east and west. The building is four storeys high and accommodates 21 apartments. Each floor contains 5 while on the roof there is a penthouse. The flats are not all the same size. The largest has 3 rooms and contains a fireplace. Most of them possess a balcony. The next in size are the flats with two rooms. The smallest were marketed as bedsitters.

There is some evidence that Helmore and Cotterill originally intended to build more than one group of flats. One of their schemes envisaged a six storey block of flats at Gloucester Street, Christchurch (Fig.89). The drawing of the proposed building is very similar to B.J. Ager's design of St. Elmo Courts (1930) in Worcester St., Christchurch (Fig.90).<sup>56</sup> In both examples, the elevation of the main façade is divided into three distinct parts. At the bottom there is a rusticated base. The middle section contains the majority of apartments and is painted a light shade of pink. The upper section is differentiated from the other parts either by a prominent cornice (St. Elmo Courts) or a change of colour (Gloucester Street flats). Each design is capped by a balustrade. Another notable similarity is the treatment of the exterior massing. In the centre of the entrance front, a block projects out from the main wall. The motif is repeated at both ends of the façade. The juxtaposition of receding and protruding spaces gives the building a fortified look and recalls Gordon Jeeves' design of a block of

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55. "Flats in the City, Nearly £50,000 Being Spent, Progress of Larger Undertakings," *Press*, 20 March 1936, p.7.

56. For a contemporary description of St. Elmo Courts see "Block of Flats, Seven-storey Building, Big Project for Christchurch," *Press*, 23 May 1929, p.4.

a flats in Dolphin Square (1937), London.<sup>57</sup> In both cases a strong monolithic quality is conveyed.

A perspective view of a group of flats has also survived (Fig.91). Though it is named Durham Court (presumably in reference to Durham Street), there seems every possibility that it is related to the Gloucester Street design. Indeed, the two designs are the same in proportion, massing, colour, and details, and it is almost certain that they are differing views of the same building. If this is the case, then this drawing must be a view of the south-west elevation. Presumably the architects intended to build it at the corner of Gloucester and Durham Streets. The flats would have been only a few blocks away from St. Elmo Courts and would have provided an interesting counterpoint.

The Gloucester Street Building was not the only major project from this period which Helmore and Cotterill did not complete. In 1939 they were placed third in the competition for a new subsidiary hospital at Cashmere, Christchurch.<sup>58</sup> A feature which this design (Fig.92) shares with the Gloucester Street flats is the stress on symmetry. In the middle, the architects have positioned a tower. On either side and situated at regular intervals they have placed the patient wards. Further back lay the boiler room and a car park. The winning entry was submitted by Gummer and Ford and Partners. The second place getter was H.L.Massey, A.P. Morgan and R.G.S. Beatson. As with Helmore and Cotterill's design, these two entries depict a main central block which is rectangular in shape. Adjoining it are wings. They are placed at right angles to the central block and presumably contain the wards for patients. Though it is difficult to ascertain exactly why Helmore and Cotterill lost - primarily because the drawings do not contain very much detail - it is possible to say that their design is the most conservative. In all three entries the main hospital block is symmetrical. Helmore and Cotterill, however, have emphasized the arrangement by placing a large tower in the centre.

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57. For a discussion of Dolphin Square see E. Jones and C. Woodward, *A Guide to The Architecture of London*. London, 1983, p.322. See also N. Pevsner and B. Cherry, *The Buildings of England: London I, The Cities of London and Westminster*. London, 1984, p.583.

58. "New Subsidiary Hospital, Design Subject to Alteration, Architects place cost at £304,000," *Press*, 27 April 1939, p.8.

Moreover, the auxiliary buildings on the left are also symmetrically disposed. By contrast, the other two entries proposed an asymmetrical pattern for the supplementary structures. The comparison is instructive for it reinforces the point that Helmore and Cotterill were never completely at home with the tenets of the Modern Movement. Indeed, one only has to compare their design with Alvar Aalto's (1898-1976) design of Paimio Sanatorium (1930-33), Finland, to see the strong differences in approach. In spite of their willingness to absorb as much as they could about the style, a certain reservedness invariably creeps into their work.

On some occasions the architects had to make radical revisions to their designs in order to placate the client. A notable example was the commission for J.H. Grigg. In 1937 his family homestead, "Longbeach," Ashburton, was burnt to the ground. Like the Elgars in the Wairarapa, he promptly turned to Helmore and Cotterill and asked them to design a new building. Given that the new homestead was to be set in spacious grounds and built on a large scale, it comes as no surprise to find the architects designing a building similar to "Fernside" and "Four Peaks." One of the first drawings (Fig.93) envisaged a rectangular block. The façade was symmetrically disposed and incorporated such features as sash windows, a loggia, a double hipped roof, and louvered shutters. The prominent use of pilasters was unusual for Helmore and Cotterill and suggests that the client had allocated large sums of money for the rebuilding of the homestead. The fact that the walls are coloured in red indicates that the architects expected to build in brick rather than timber.

In the next group of drawings Helmore and Cotterill tried a different approach. Whereas the first drawing seems indebted to eighteenth-century buildings like "Westover," the second batch of designs (Figs.94-95) are more in tune with the "Colonial Revival" buildings of McKim, Mead, and White. The wing adjoining the main block was given more windows, extra gables were introduced, and three dormer windows were added to the roof. On the south elevation a gable projected out from the block. Next to it lay an imposing entrance. Instead of pilasters, the architects introduced attenuated columns. On either side of the entrance they planned to insert an

elliptical window. A connection was formed between it and the fanlight above the doorway. The effect was designed to inject some variety into the composition and relieve the strong emphasis on perpendicularity and straight lines.

According to Bowman, this option eventually proved too expensive and the architects were forced to adopt another design.<sup>59</sup> Instead of modifying their original drawings and producing a scaled down version of what they had produced, Helmore and Cotterill opted for a completely different solution. Though the new building was to be built in brick, the strong Colonial Georgian overtones of the former designs were discarded. Particularly obvious is the lack of symmetry. The massing of the building and the organization of the façades are asymmetrical (Fig.96). Of special interest are the gables. Unlike those depicted in the earlier plans, they are more steeply pitched and irregularly positioned. Some of the sides are unequal in length. In keeping with this approach, the plan is informally disposed. On the ground and first floors the bulk of the rooms are situated on the south side. No attempt was made to counterbalance the arrangement by placing a similar cluster of rooms at another part of the house.

While drawing up the final plans for J.H. Grigg, Helmore and Cotterill contemplated using whitewash bricks for the exterior walls. They later abandoned this idea on the grounds that the natural colour of the burnt bricks was a more "effective" substitute.<sup>60</sup> The effect is enhanced by the dark brown colour of the roof shingles, the wooden sash windows, and the addition of red bricks from Ashburton (Figs.97-98).<sup>61</sup> The aim, it seems, was to convey a sense of unity and natural growth.

The setting is another factor which may have influenced their decision to use local materials. The garden, which had been cultivated for more than fifty years, "was

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59. Bowman, answer to a questionnaire, October 1988.

60. "A Country House in Wooded Grounds: new house to replace the Old Grigg homestead, destroyed by fire," *Home and Building*, IX, March 1946, p.11.

61. A. Bowman, *The Study of the Historical Development of Domestic Architecture in Canterbury, New Zealand. The Building of the Maori displaced by the European designs, methods of construction introduced by the French and British Settlements and the influences resulting in the subsequent development of domestic architecture*. Thesis submitted at the examination for membership of the Royal Institute of British Architects, 1941. Canterbury University College Library, p.83.

set in very beautiful wooded grounds reminiscent of the English countryside."<sup>62</sup> As is the case with Lutyens's design for "Munstead Wood," Surrey (1893-97), "Longbeach" seems to blend in with the surroundings. One of the leading advocates of this approach was Gertrude Jekyll (1843-1932), a close adviser to Lutyens.

The architect [of Munstead Wood] has a thorough knowledge of the local ways of using the sandstone that grows in our hills, and that for many centuries has been the building material of the district, and of all the lesser incidental methods of adapting means to ends that mark the well-defined way of building of the country, so that what he builds seems to grow naturally out of the ground.<sup>63</sup>

The link between "Longbeach" and examples of Lutyens's early work is further underscored by the rendering of the exterior surfaces. Bowman has suggested that the "bulk and general shape" of Longbeach is reminiscent of Lutyens's "Surrey Cottage" style.<sup>64</sup> One only has to look at buildings like "Munstead Wood" (Fig.99) to see the connection. The close grouping of the gables, the crisp delineation of the contours, and the tall height of the chimneys, suggest that Helmore was still strongly influenced by his former teacher.

In fact, Longbeach is atypical. None of Helmore and Cotterill's other house designs are so clearly indebted to the arts and crafts style. It is unlikely that Helmore had paid much attention to Lutyens's early work prior to 1930. At the time Helmore was in London, Lutyens had gravitated away from the "Surrey Cottage" style towards the "high game" of Palladio. With the reprinting of such books as the *Houses and Gardens* by E.L. Lutyens by Lawrence Weaver a few years later, interest began to shift to the early country homes. Helmore undoubtedly owned a copy and may have been inspired to produce a design which evoked the period.

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62. "A Country House in Wooded Grounds."

63. See D. Watkin, *The English Vision: The Picturesque in Architecture, Landscape and Garden Design*. London, 1982, p.151.

64. Bowman, answer to a questionnaire, October 1988.

That said, it is apparent that Helmore and Cotterill had no intention of creating an exact copy. The articulation of "Longbeach" is very crisp and clean cut. Unlike "Munstead Wood" the angles are sharper and more vigourously defined. In many respects these qualities reflect the growing influence of the Modern Movement. Though attracted to the Surrey Vernacular style Helmore and Cotterill were equally attuned to the developments of their own period. It is a testament to the architects' professional abilities that they were able to draw on such diverse sources and weld them into a distinctive whole.

Although "Longbeach" has received much critical attention and been justly praised as Helmore and Cotterill's most outstanding achievement, some of their other designs from this period have largely been overlooked. Of particular interest are the three blocks of semi-detached maisonettes (1939-41) along Bealey Ave., Christchurch (Fig.100). After looking at "Longbeach," these buildings come as quite a surprise. In many respects, the presence of these maisonettes adds substance to the view that Helmore and Cotterill were willing to experiment with as many approaches as possible. They have avoided very rich decorative effects and concentrated on designing three very simple and plain structures. Because of the limited amount of space, each flat is tightly organized. On the ground floor the entrance is located by the sun porch. Adjoining this room are the hall, kitchen, and living room. The stairs, which are located in the hall, lead up to a sleeping porch. Adjacent to this are two bedrooms and a bathroom. The exterior of each block is modest; there are no grand central entrances, sash windows, or louvered shutters.

In hindsight, the maisonettes are the closest that Helmore and Cotterill came to International Modernism in the 1930s. Unlike Coldstream Lodge, there is no hint of ornamentation in the design. The architects have also omitted curved walls and opted for a more angular look. Another feature which is in keeping with the style is the stress on horizontality. Here the effect is conveyed principally by the uniform rows of weatherboards and the bands of casement windows. The stark appearance of the street façade is heightened by the rejection of hipped roofs and sloping gables. From a

distance the roof of each maisonette appears to be flat. This is not so and suggests that Helmore and Cotterill still entertained some doubts about the movement. The plan of the buildings reveals a pitch roof which is hidden from view by a parapet. Had the architects been more pedantic about their line of approach, they would have made the roof flat. No doubt Ernest Plischke, one of New Zealand's post-war modernist architects, would have expressed some disapproval about the maisonettes.

Just as superficial is the exterior of these so-called modernistic houses. On clear observation we find that shutters do not shut; that these houses do not really have flat roofs, but merely hide an ordinary corrugated iron or asbestos roof behind a high parapet which has no other reason for being there. This is only pretending something which is not true.<sup>65</sup>

As with their colonial designs, Helmore and Cotterill do not appear to be interested in the exact implications of the style. The main objective, it seems, was to faithfully capture the essential qualities of the selected idiom. Form rather than meaning was the guiding principle for both architects.

It is perhaps fitting to conclude with an examination of the W.H. Mordaunt House (Fig.101). It was one of the last buildings to be erected by Helmore and Cotterill in 1940. Like so many of their house designs from the period, it exemplifies their ability to respond to each situation in a way which is entirely appropriate.

The house is located at the top of Scarborough Hill, Sumner and overlooks Pegasus Bay. From the northern side one can view the seaward Kaikoura range while from the east it is possible to observe Godley Head. The western prospect is dominated by the Canterbury Plains and the Southern Alps. Three sides of the boundary are marked by a cliff and surrounded by the sea. Because the house is exposed to the elements from all angles, there is very little tree cover. The strong winds which buffet the site induced the architects to flatten the contours of the house. The roof is very low-pitched and has wide overhanging eaves. In contrast to the thinner and more vertical

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65. E.A. Plischke, *Design and Living*. Wellington, 1947, p.37.



types of chimneys that Helmore and Cotterill liked to use, the ones here are small and squat. Even the concrete terrace was protected from the stiff breeze. On two sides a plate glass screen fitted to steel frames and measuring 2.1 metres in height was installed. On days when the conditions were calm, the screens could be slid open.<sup>66</sup>

A notable feature of the Mordaunt House is the widespread use of stone. It is used not only for the chimneys, but also for the walls. Most of the stone was acquired from local quarries. The remaining portions were taken from the actual site. This was unusual as Helmore and Cotterill generally worked with this material quite sparingly. In many of their designs they employed it mainly around the fireplaces. Their favourite type was Mt. Somers stone. In the case of the Mordaunt House, it appears that the client specifically asked them to build a home which was more durable than timber structures.<sup>67</sup> To ensure that there were no lingering doubts about the solidity of the building, the walls were lined with concrete. The total thickness was 250 millimetres, almost on a par with many of Chapman-Taylor's designs.

The austere and simplified treatment of the exterior is in keeping with the natural surroundings. Neither the architects nor the client wanted a house which would stand out against the landscape. The effect is achieved, in part, by the colouring of the building materials. The grey Welsh slates of the roof and the warm greys of the stone chimneys and walls harmonize with the monochromatic tones of the terrain. Another device which binds the house to its location is the outline of the roof. The gentle slope of the sides is in accord with the topography. Helmore and Cotterill were always searching for the appropriate model and here it seems to have been Seager. Between 1902 and 1914 the latter built eight timber houses in Sumner. These designs are one storey high and have low-pitched roofs. The eaves are prominent and project out, and the chimneys are kept low. The partners may have also been drawn to Seager's Sign of the Packhorse (1916-17) on the Port Hills, Christchurch. It is built of local volcanic

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66. "The home of Mr. W.H. Mordaunt," *Home and Building*, V, June 1941, p.13.

67. Bowman, *The Study of the Historical Development of Domestic Architecture in Canterbury, New Zealand*, p.96.

stone and appears to be part of the natural landscape.<sup>68</sup> Like Seager, Helmore and Cotterill placed their structure in a vulnerable position. It is exposed to extreme weather conditions and appears to hug the contours of the land. Such buildings seem to evade stylistic definitions. The use of local materials and the close identification with the locale imbues the Mordaunt House design with a sense of timelessness.

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68. For a discussion of Seager's designs see I.J. Lochhead, "The Architectural Art of Samuel Hurst Seager," *Art New Zealand*, XLIV, 1987, pp.92-99.

## POSTSCRIPT

The outbreak of war in September 1939 brought to an end one of the most productive and interesting phases of Helmore and Cotterill's work. As is the case with many other New Zealand architects, the war prevented them from maintaining the same level of commitment they had enjoyed during the first fifteen years of the practice. The manpower shortage, coupled with restrictions on building materials, caused a large amount of dislocation in the housing market. For the next four years civilian building construction was overshadowed by the emphasis on defense building operations. The hiatus was such that Helmore felt free enough to resume his duties as an Aide-de-Camp to the Governor General of New Zealand.

Although they were to produce a number of significant buildings after 1945, notably the Rannerdale War Veteran's Home in Riccarton, Christchurch (1955), the post-war period was not nearly so eventful as the 1920s and 1930s. None of their later buildings, for instance, quite match the audacity and precociousness of Coldstream Lodge. Neither, for that matter, did they produce works as authoritative as "Fernside" or "Longbeach" Homestead. It would be a mistake to assume that the next twenty years led to a slow and gradual decline. On the contrary, Helmore and Cotterill continued to produce work of a high standard. By and large, however, they were content to watch other architects take up the challenge of Modernism. Given the choice, they would have almost certainly opted to work in a much earlier period of architectural history. From what has been said, it is apparent that a strong undercurrent of nostalgia flows through their work. By the 1950s and 1960s such attitudes would have seemed positively unfashionable and placed the pair at odds with the new climate of thought.

Having begun this study with a comparison of Helmore and Cotterill and Lutyens, it is perhaps appropriate that we end by drawing another parallel between the architects. In 1939 Helmore and Cotterill were asked to design a centennial memorial

commemorating the pioneer women of Canterbury (Fig.102). The site chosen overlooked Lyttelton Harbour, the spot where the first Canterbury settlers arrived, and was placed adjacent to the Bridle Path, the track which originally connected the port to Christchurch. Although the memorial is built of local volcanic stone, it is very similar to the Cotswold stone garden house Lutyens designed in 1900-01 (Figs.103-104). This small structure is located at Abbotswood, Gloucestershire and is about the same size. The walls of each building are hexagonal, the roofs fan out at the eaves, and the circular openings on the sides have the same proportions. In a sense this memorial is not only a homage to the efforts of the pioneer women of the region, but also a tribute to the work of Lutyens. Helmore and Cotterill, who had always maintained a high degree of respect for the English architect, may have felt that the time had come to make a more positive acknowledgement. None of their earlier designs allude to a specific Lutyens building. Previously, they had attempted only to capture the general qualities of his style. It is a poignant statement as Helmore and Cotterill were never able to pursue a completely traditional approach after 1940. Before the Second World War had ended Lutyens was dead and in the post-war era a new style of building would prevail.

## APPENDIX A

Below is a checklist of buildings by Helmore and Cotterill. In keeping with the objectives of this study, the list only covers the work they did between 1914 and 1940. The numbers in the left hand columns refer to the drawings of these buildings. One set of numbers was given to the drawings by the late John Hendry, a former associate of Guy Cotterill. Later, the Canterbury Museum added their own list of numbers. All these drawings are held in the Pictorial Archives section, Canterbury Museum, Christchurch. An asterisk indicates that the drawing in question is no longer extant. The sequence follows that of the numbering system employed by Hendry.

HELMORE AND COTTERILL	COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS
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John Hendry Number	Cant'y Museum Number	Address/Title	Client	Date
144	819-21	Alterations and Additions [In collaboration with W. H. Trengrove.]	Messrs Briscoe & Co.	1927
187	1028- 1033	Cook and Ross Building, Victoria Square, Chch.	Cook and Ross Ltd., Chemists	1926
219c	1096- 1098	Methven, Grain Store	Dalgety & Co.	1936
233	1159-	Cathedral Square, Chch., Additions	Fletcher Humphreys	1927
370	1736- 1739	Timaru, State Theatre, Alterations and additions, [In collaboration with R. S.D. Harman.]	Amalgamated Theatres Ltd.	1935
468	*	Hereford St., Chch., alterations and additions	Union Bank of Australia	1933
494	1926	Colombo St., Chch., Alterations	Messrs Taylors Ltd.	1937
497	1929	Lambton Quay, Wellington Ltd.	Salon Celia	1935



HELMORE AND COTTERILL	HOUSES
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John Hendry Number	Cant'y Museum Number	Address/Title	Client	Date
114	763-767	Coldstream Lodge, Chch.	K.W. Ballanytne	1933
117	771	South Canterbury "Four Peaks" Homestead	J.S. Barker	1925
131	785	14 Hackthorne Rd., Chch.	F.W. Bicknell	1924
132	786-788	53 Murphy St., Wgtn.	Charles Birch	1926
133	789	Marton	Mrs. Caccia Birch	1937
137	797-802	Masterton, Wairarapa "Te Whanga" Homestead	P.J. Borthwick	1939
139	803	Orari, Homestead	Commander A. D. Boyle	1938
143-143a	809	Wainui, Banks Peninsula	M.A. Bright	1926
191	1037-1038	17 Beverley St., Chch.	Mrs. T.L. Cowlshaw	1933
196	1048-1049	Heretaunga, Wgtn.	J.C. Crawford	1927
199	1055	88 Dyers Pass Rd., Cashmere, Chch.	Dr. T.L. Crooke	1926
205	1065	Hammers Spring, Cottage	Mrs. Dawson	1929
221	1104-1111	Featherston, Wairarapa	Charles Elgar	1924-1925
228	1149-1152	Bealey Ave., Semi-detached Maisonettes	A.M. Carpenter	1939-1941
235	1170	Leinster Rd., Chch., Flats	A.K. Firth	c. 1935
248	1193-1195	Surrey Hills, Homestead	Arthur Grigg	1929
249	1196-1204	Mid-Canterbury, "Longbeach"	J.H. Grigg	1938



HELMORE AND COTTERILL	HOUSES
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John Hendry Number	Cant'y Museum Number	Address/Title	Client	Date
265	1245	125 Deans Ave., Chch.	Major G.F. Hutton	1925
276	1313-1318	Masterton, Homestead	B. Maunsell	1925
277	1319-1323	Fitzherbert Tce., Wgtn	J.B. MacEwen	1926
285	1394	Pigeon Bay, Homestead	J.B. Hay	1938
292	1406	Lowry Hills, Ethleton, via Chch.	George R. MacDonald	1925
297	1417-1419	54 Glandovey Rd., Chch.	Ivan Seay	1932
299	1422-1423	Scarborough Head, Canty.	W.H. Mordaunt	1940
309	1447	Fitzherbert Tce., Wgtn	C. MacDermott	1934
343	1578-1579	Circuit St.	Walter Radford	1940
346	1581	Managess Cottage	J.H. Rhodes	1927
399	1787-1788	Park Tce., Ch.ch	B.E.H. Whitcombe	1936
420	1822-1826	Lower Hutt	James Vogel	1932
421	1827-1848	Victoria St., Chch, Victoria Mansions	-	1937
428	1861-1862	42 Wroxton Tce., Chch.	W.G.V. Fernie	1927
433	1873	Cashmere, Chch.	Miss A. Johnston	1933
434	1874	Palmerston North	Miss J. Hope Johnston	c. 1925
437	1881-2	17 Wairarapa Tce., Chch.	Mrs. J.D. Millton	1928

HELMORE AND COTTERILL	HOUSES
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John Hendry Number	Cant'y Museum Number	Address/Title	Client	Date
447	1894	Ayers St., Rangiora	F.D.R. Smith	1927
450	1895	Alfredton, "Te Hoe" Homestead	Cecil Kebbeel	1926
454	1899	72 Glandovey Rd., Chch.	B. Todd	1930
459	1905	Amberley, "Glendale" Homestead	Oswyn Wells	1934
465	1910	35 Wairarapa Tce., Chch.	Algar Williams	1926
472	*	8 Holly Rd., Chch.	Mrs. Edith Pinckney	1924
476	*	Waikari, Canterbury	Maurice MacFarlane	1925
478	*	Chch., House	Walter J. Moore	1925
480	*	Wairarapa, Homestead	F.D. Helmore	1924
481	*	Kowhai Bush, House	Major R. Howell	1924
484	*	Halwell, Homestead	Ernest Gray [Trustees of Estate]	1926
489	1921	Otorohanga, Homestead	Major H.H.S. Westmacott	1928
490	1920	34 Beverley St., Papanui, Chch.	Ivan Wood	c. 1930
508	1938	Aikmans Rd., Chch.	Mrs. E.W. Johnstone	1939

HELMORE AND COTTERILL	HOUSES - ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS
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John Hendry Number	Cant'y Museum Number	Address/Title	Client	Date
103	740-746	Tipapa, Canterbury	H.W. Acton-Adams	1928
118	*	House	C. Barton	1925
147	822	Kinloch, Little River, Homestead	J.F. Buchanan	1925
162	845-847	"Glendu" Homestead	N.D. Campbell	1928
209	1072	Waiau, "The Gates" Homestead	P.R. Dearden	1934
241	1181	Rotherham, "The Hermitage"	R. Gould	1926
246	1190	Homestead "Teviotdale"	H.D. Greenwood	1934
268	1250-1251	Browns Rd., Chch.	Owen Johnston	1939
284	1390	"The Hermitage," Rotherham	R. Gould	1926
296	1416	Merivale Lane, Chch.	Miss. O.D. McIlraith	1925
327	1556	- -	A.C. Nicholls	1938
329	1557	Murray Place, Chch.	Alan Hobbs	1939
341	1699-1703	Waimate, Homestead	N.A. Rattray	1929
350	1584	Riccarton Road, Chch.	Mrs. George Hampton Rhodes	1925
356	1604	Murray Place, Chch.	C. Stringer	1930
395	1779	Cashmere, Chch. [conversion of the house into 4 flats]	D. Wood	1938
406	1800-1801	Palmerston North	Dr. H. Will	1932
409	1803-1804	Ilam Rd., Chch.	I.D. Wood	1928
417	1814-1815	Palmerston North	Dr. D.S. Wyllie	1932

HELMORE AND COTTERILL		HOUSES - ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS		
John Hendry Number	Cant'y Museum Number	Address/Title	Client	Date
427	1859- 1860	Masterton, "Matahiwi"	H. Holmes	1927
445	1890- 1892	Palmerston North, "Whare Rata"	Mrs. A. Russell	1939
446	1893	"Benmore" Homestead	F.M. Robinson	1934
454a	1900	Wellington	Bryan Todd	1930
455	1901- 1902	Glandovey Rd., Chch.	Mrs. T. Teschemaker	1929
464	*	Christchurch, House	J.W. Woodhouse	1929
475	1913	Cashmere, Chch.	Dr. C.L. Nedwill	1923
477	*	House and garage	A.C. Moysey	1927
479	1914	Waiwetu St., Chch.	H. Kitson	1923
503	1932	Heathfield Ave., Chch.	G.E.F. Kingscote	1933

HELMORE AND COTTERILL	PUBLIC BUILDINGS
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John Hendry Number	Cant'y Museum Number	Address/Title	Client	Date
396	1780- 1781	Additions to Waiau Hall	Waiau Hall Building Committee	1937

HELMORE AND COTTERILL	RECREATIONAL BUILDINGS
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John Hendry Number	Cant'y Museum Number	Address/Title	Client	Date
165	*	Canterbury Jockey Club, interior decoration, cocktail bar	Canterbury	1930
170	1928	No.2 Squash Court	Christchurch Club	1928
177	965- 969	Shirley, Chch., Christchurch Golf Club	Christchurch Golf Club	1927
204	1060- 1064	Riccarton, Baron's Court Social Dance Hall	-	1930
456	*	Christchurch, Winter Garden, new supper room and kitchen quarters	Winter Garden, P. Burke and Co., Ltd.	1937

HELMORE AND COTTERILL	STUDENT WORK
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John Hendry Number	Cant'y Museum Number	Address/Title	Client	Date
279	1361	Design for pair of Country Shops. [signed H.G. Helmore]	-	1914
-	2406, 2408	Block of Flats [signed Lanchester, Rickards, & Lucas]	-	1921
-	2407	Detail of door and staircase	-	-
-	2409- 2410	Doddington Hall, Lincolnshire [signed H.G. Helmore and H.G. Cotterill]	-	Sept. 1921
-	2411- 2412	Imperial Delhi: -Back Loggia's to Houses for Director of Music & Assistant Surgeon. Schedule B. Sections 3 & 4. C.E. 1935. -Detail of End of Loggia between Ward & Store. Schedule B. Drawing No.214. C.E. 1934. -Details of Back Loggias, Entrances, etc. Schedule B. Drawing No.216. C.E. 1936. [signed E.L. Lutyens]	-  -  -	Sept. 1918  -  -

## APPENDIX B

Excerpts from letters Helmore wrote to his family in New Zealand - 1920-1922.

[a] Letter to his father, 11 October 1920:

*"...Now that we are at work there seems to be so little time to write. We start work at 10. am which is very nice, have an hour for lunch and knock off at 6 pm, which seemed very late. I don't think we could have got into a nicer office and Mr Lanchester and Mr Lucas are both very nice. Mr Lanchester as I believe I told you is the Indian partner, and he spends six months of the year in India and six months here. Mr Rickards, the 3rd member of the firm died unfortunately a few days after we were taken on. He was a very brilliant man and a great artist. A book of his paintings and drawings are being published. I have seen a lot of his work, especially perspectives, at the the office and they really are wonderful. He was only 46 when he died and was thought very highly of in the profession. Mr Lucas of course is well known for his domestic work and the two biggest jobs we have on at present are two big Garden City schemes - one at Weybridge of about 100 houses and a very big one at Portsmouth of over a thousand. The staff consists of two young draughtsmen, both architects and very nice chaps, two girls (elderly), one a tracer and the other Secretary and a young student. They are all awfully nice and easy to get on with and in fact the whole crowd seem just like a happy family. Mr Lanchester goes off to India next month, where work is piling up. The office is in Bedford Square and is only a twelve minutes walk from here which is a great blessing as buses and trikes are too awful just before and after office hours. ...Soon it will be grand as Guy and I are both up as members of the Architectural Ass. which is also in Bedford Square and when we get elected we will be able to get a very nice lunch there for 2/- without any rush. They have delightful rooms and a very good library and a great number of architects and students use it. We have made up a table at the office for a dinner there next Monday week at which Sir Edwin Lutyens is going to give an address on Architecture. I am looking forward to seeing and hearing him very much as I have always had such a great admiration for his work. ..."*

[b] Letter to his mother, 2 February [1921]:

*"...Guy and I had a very interesting time last week as Mr Lanchester has written from India to say that he has to build a Parliament House and wanted tracings of*



*some large ones for reference. So we spent three days at the R.I.B.A. Library and in consequence found some extremely interesting books. It is a wonderful place - they have every book on architecture that has ever been published and it amused me to see the numbers of Architects who came in to get ideas for some building or other. I must say things are made very easy for Architects in this country. The exhibitions at the Institute are most interesting, especially the one of measured drawings of famous old buildings, which is on at present. The winner gets £50 and if Guy and I measure up Doddington Hall this summer we are thinking of putting the drawings into it next year. Of course it involves a lot and time but it is considered better than anything else in the way of Arch. [sic] education and I am sure that [this] is the case. Nothing gives one a better idea of the proportion of these beautiful buildings or impresses it on ones memory more, and the opportunity of measuring up Doddington is a splendid one. I think I told you before it is in Lincolnshire next door to the Liverpools who have asked us to stay there while we do the work. The house is considered the most perfect example of a brick 1600 century house in England and is too lovely for words. ..."*

[c] Letter to his father, 10 June [1921]:

*"...Well Guy and I are both actually leaving the office next month, been there nearly a year, isn't it extraordinary how time flies. We are both awfully sorry to go and they all seem very sorry that we are leaving, which is rather nice. Mr Lucas has been very decent, says he absolutely agrees that we should not lose the chance this summer of travelling round a bit, sketching etc and when we come back he has asked us to go and see him. If there is lots of work (which at the present moment is not the case) we may go back if we like and if not he will help us all he can in the way of letters of introductions to other good men. Being on the Council this will be most useful. I personally think a change would be a good thing and you may be sure I have not [been] idle in the way of getting introductions from influential people, I have had the chance of meeting in London. This kind of thing tells a great deal over here, far more so than in the colonies. ..."*

[d] Letter to his sister, Kathleen ["Doods"]:

*"... I expect the family told you that I am in Sir Edwin Lutyens Office. He is the most famous Architect in England and is doing all kinds of interesting work. Among other things is a huge dolls house for the Queen, which she has asked to have made so that it can be handed down to all the future little princes and princesses that come along. Sir Edwin Lutyens is designing it and it is all being*

*built about six feet high on a stand and has four stories. The sides slide up so that one can look into all the rooms which are beautifully panelled in real panelling with lapis-laglia and marble fireplaces, with proper grates and flues so that fires can be lighted and the smoke goes up the chimney. The drawing [room is] so lovely with a blue marble mantelpiece and the walls covered with a blue and silver brocade. On this are hung portraits of the King and Queen and different members of the Royal Family painted by Sargeant and all the famous artists. The staircase is lovely off white marble with wrought iron blaustrade. There is a real lift which works and of course all the doors open and shut. Off the King and Queens bedrooms are bathrooms of marble with baths and basins with hot and cold water laid on, and a "you know what" which works by pulling the chain.*

*The furniture, piano and carpets etc are all being given by different well known London firms and the dolls which stand 6" high are simply beautiful. The whole thing is to the scale of one inch equals one foot.*

*Sir Edwin is taking as much trouble over it as if it were a real house and you should see the sheets of drawings of panelling; mouldings etc that have been done. I have been working on it just now and he took some of my drawings to show the Queen today. She is awfully interested and has been once to the Office herself, as have lots of other members of the Royal family, and other amusing people. It is no wonder that everyone is so interested as I should imagine nothing so marvellous has ever been attempted before. The Office I am in (Sir Edwin has two) is in St James Square only just round the corner so I am able to spring out of bed and into the office in one jump. ..."*

## APPENDIX C

A list of the bequests to the Canterbury Museum Trust Board contained in clause 9 of the Will of Heathcote Helmore, signed 23 April 1965. [CH 171, PR 606/1965, National Archives, Christchurch.]

- "(1) Queen Anne Walnut Bureau with fall front, the lower portion having two short and two long drawers and standing on bracket feet. The interior of the upper portion fitted up as a writing bureau with pigeon-holes and small drawers including several secret drawers.
- (2) William & Mary Walnut Chest on stand with twisted legs and shaped stretchers, the upper portion containing two short drawers and three long drawers and the stand two further short drawers all inlaid with seaweed marquetry and having the original handles and escutcheons.
- (3) A similar sized Chest on stand in black lacquer with Chinese decoration in gold and red.
- (4) Grandfather clock in walnut case with broken pediment finished with brass finials. This clock was made by Anth. Marsh a Member of the Clockmakers Company in 1714. He worked opposite the Bank of England in the City of London.
- (5) Small walnut China Cabinet on stand with twisted legs and shaped stretcher. The glazed doors inlaid with seaweed marquetry. Period of Charles II.
- (6) Queen Anne walnut side table with three drawers inlaid with banding and standing on cabriole legs, pad feet. Circa 1700 George I.
- (7) China cabinet in red lacquer on stand with stretcher having small platform in centre and panels of deeply carved and coloured Chinese scenes in the freeze portion. The cabinet enclosed with glazed doors and side panels and fitted in the interior with two plate glass shelves. Chinese of uncertain age.

- (8) Tall Queen Anne mirror with shaped top, the frame of eglamise in red with decoration. Circa 1700. Very rare.
- (9) Small fall-fronted cabinet in Chinese lacquer standing on cabriole legs. The black lacquer highly decorated and having two gilt gesso panels. The interior fitted with small drawers in black lacquer. Late 18th century.
- (10) Two very important William III high-backed chairs in carved walnut in the style of Daniel Marot. One with back panels and seat of cane and the other with pierced and carved and slat. Both chairs have cabriole legs finishing onto looped feet.
- (11) Queen Anne lace box in walnut, the hinged lid decorated with oyster inlay and at present in the museum.
- (12) Pair of painted and shaped Dummy Board Figures of Dutch Children (boy and girl) in the dress of the period used as Firescreens (17th century) (Bought in London in 1921).
- (13) Cromwellian Lantern Clock in brass.
- (14) Large painting in oils in antique frame of Men-of-war in action. Artist unknown. (Purchased by Mrs. Elgar from Lenagon & Morratt in 1924 and bequeathed by her to me in 1945.)
- (15) Pair of deeply carved wood figures of Cherubs, both kneeling on one knee and coloured in gilt and flesh colour. probably South German 1676. (Purchased in Salsberg [sic], Austria in 1928).
- (16) Small Queen Anne mirror in bolection moulded frame. Circa 1700.
- (17) Dutch brass chandelier with six branches. Pair of brass bracket lights to match.
- (18) Late Georgian Dining Table in mahogany with one leaf and supported on tripod base at either end, terminating in brass castors.

- (19) Narrow side table in mahogany supported on tall turned legs and containing three drawers.
- (20) Side table in ebonised wood with solid base. The top supported by a pair of carved and gilt dolphins. Late Regency circa 1810.
- (21) Bow-fronted hanging corner cupboard in mahogany, the curved door inlaid with black ebony - Sheraton period 18[th-century].
- (22) Adam wooden painted mantelpiece with carved freeze and keyblock circa 1800. (Purchased in Bloomsbury London during demolition of some Adam houses off Bedford Square London).
- (23) Architects drawing and writing table in mahogany supported on fluted legs. Fitted with one large drawer containing writing slide and pigeon holes under same. The rising adjustable top flap can be set at any angle, whether low for sitting or high for standing. (Late Georgian).
- (24) Oak refectory draw-table on turned legs with centre stretcher.
- (25) Small and rare oak coffer with hinged lid.
- (26) Tall-backed chair in oak heavily carved and supported on twisted legs.
- (27) Arm chair in ebonised mahogany Hepplewhite about 1775.
- (28) Small walnut hanging cabinet having glazed doors and splayed sides. Broken pediment top and one drawer (circa 1710).
- (29) Tall ladder-back cottage chair in elm with arms and a rush seat."

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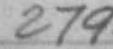
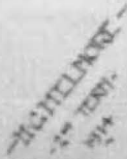
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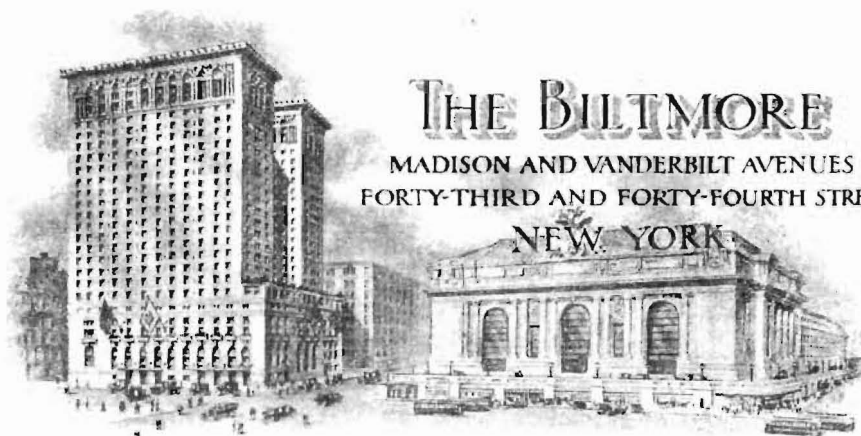






CABLE ADDRESS "BILTMORE" NEW YORK

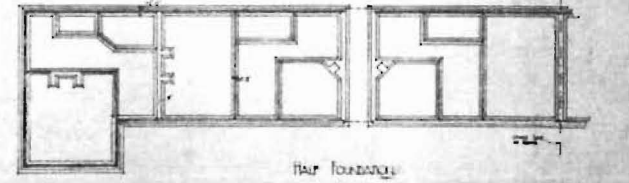
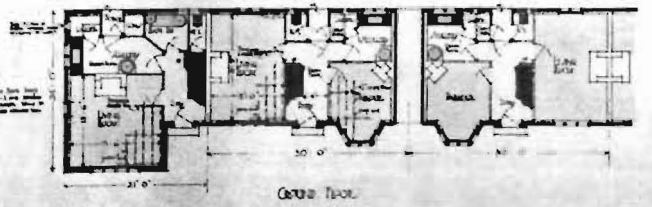
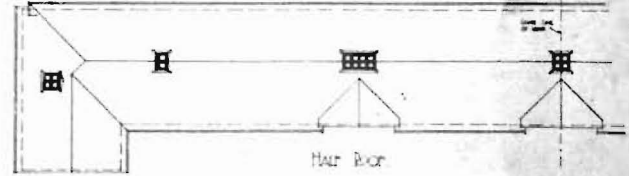
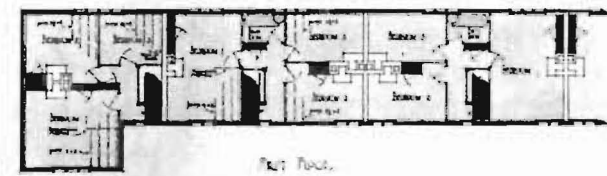
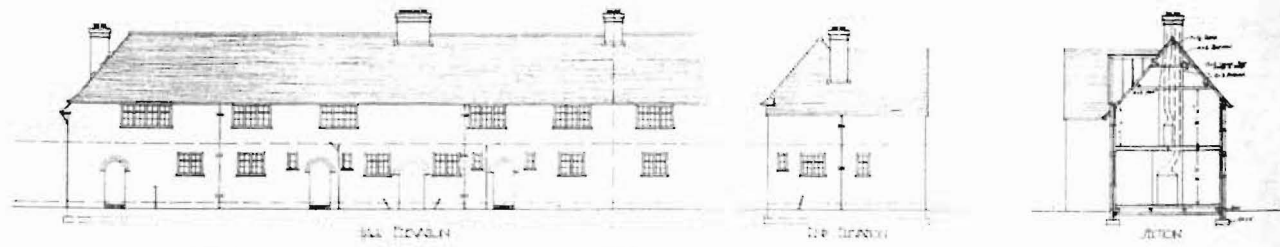
TELEPHONE MURRAY HILL 7920



**THE BILTMORE**  
 MADISON AND VANDERBILT AVENUES  
 FORTY-THIRD AND FORTY-FOURTH STREETS  
 NEW YORK

JOHN Mc E. BOWMAN, PRESIDENT

Roof Garden where one has supper  
 dances & watches the most amazing  
 show in which the most beautiful girls  
 in New York take part. Wonderful  
 tableaux & ballets. We spent all yesterday  
 & today sight seeing. The buildings are  
 very fine architecturally & even the sky  
 scraper look dignified. Much Love  
 will write a fuller description later  
 when time is not so precious  
 Yours ever  
 Heathcote.



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
19 RECTOR SQUARE W. C. I.



DODDINGTON HALL  
LINCOLNSHIRE

Scale of Feet  
0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100



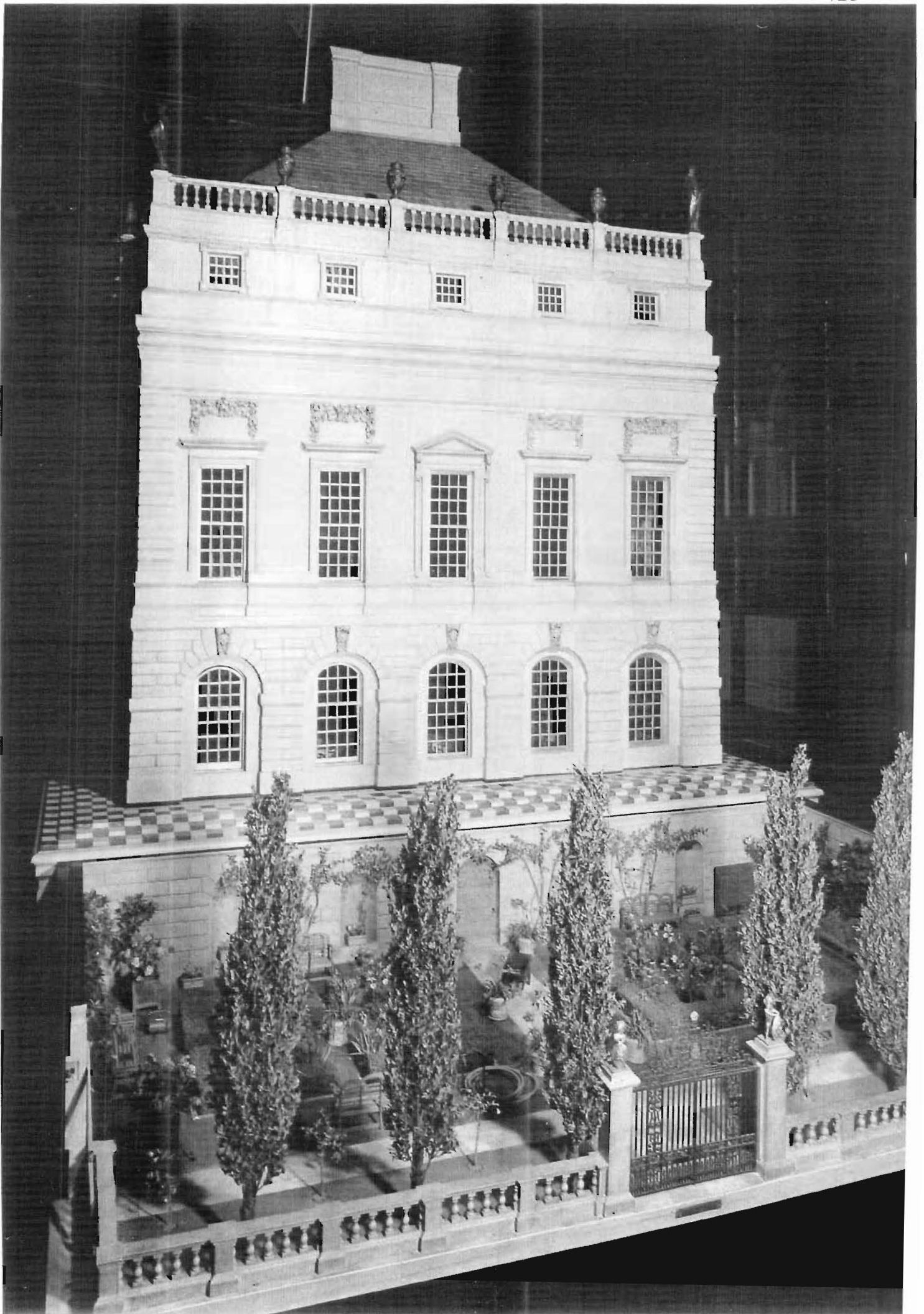
• ENTRANCE • FRONT •





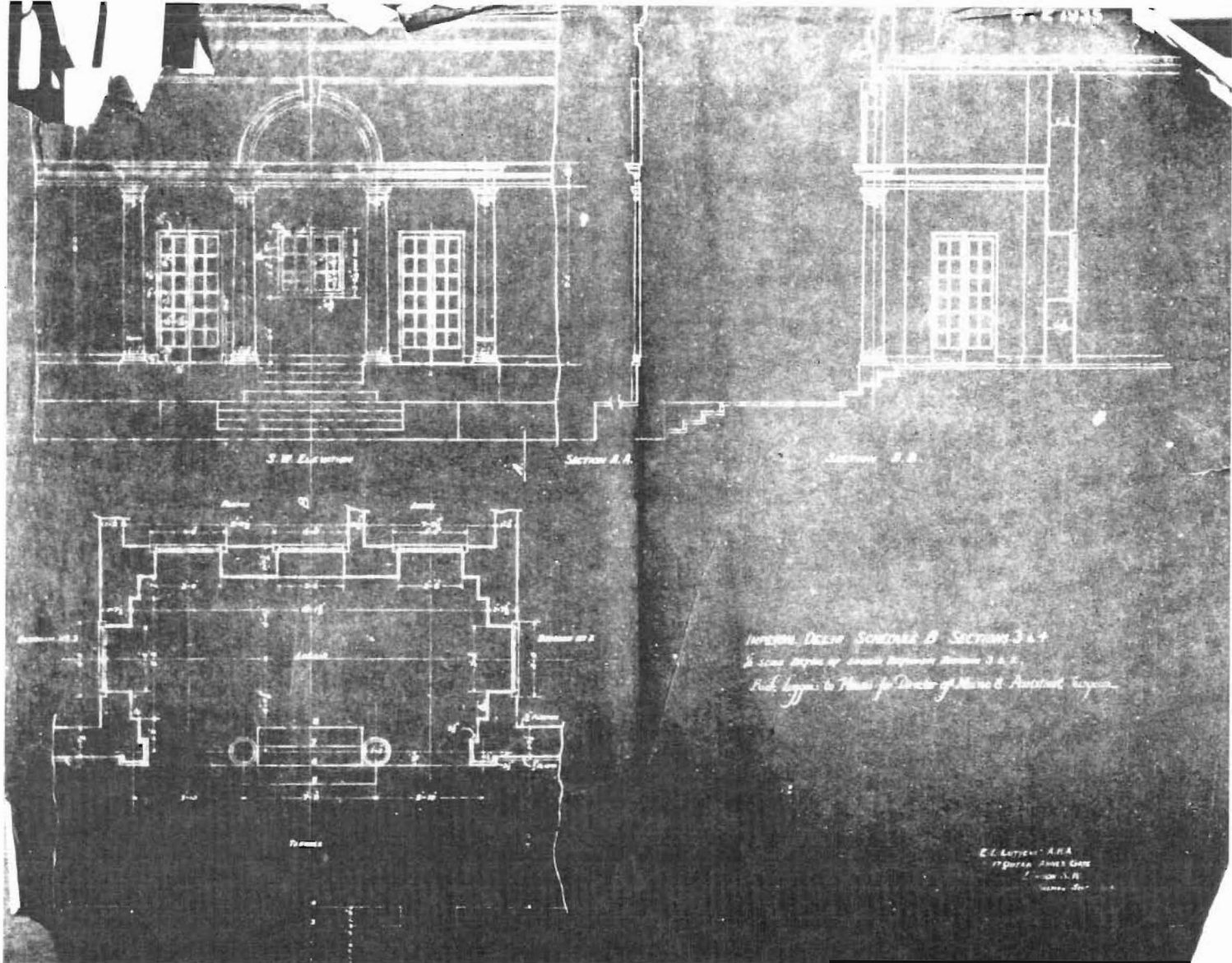




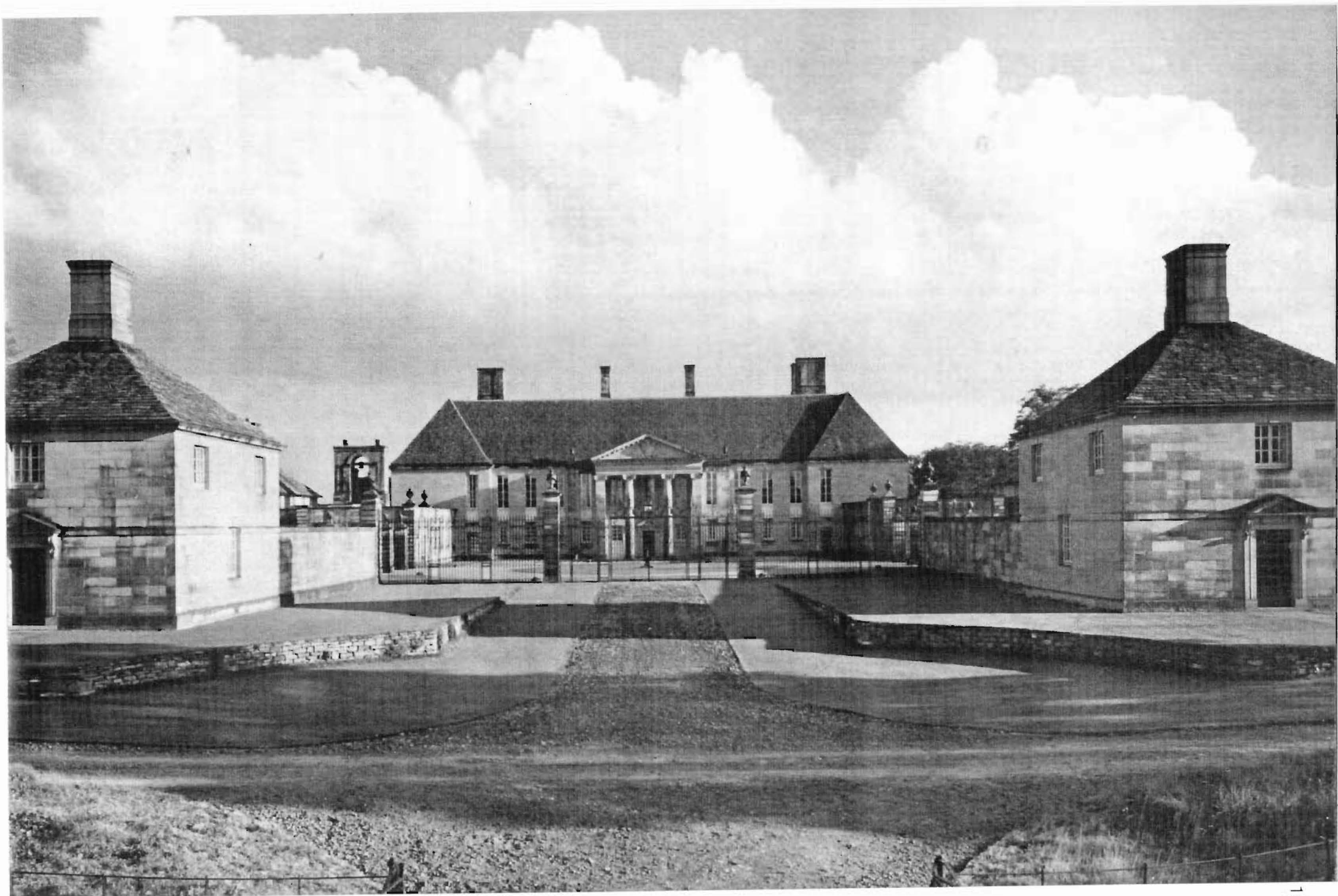
















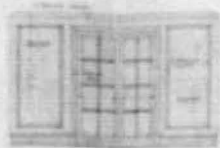




# ALTERATIONS & ADDITIONS TO HOMES, CATHMERE

BY DR. C. L. NICHOLL

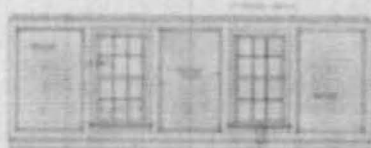
ARCHT. 1904, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908, 1909



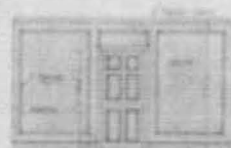
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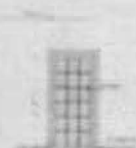
WEST ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION



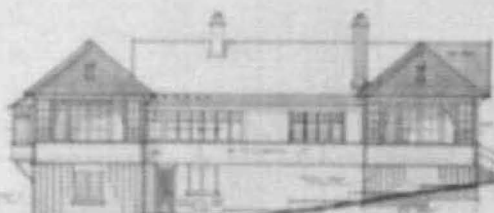
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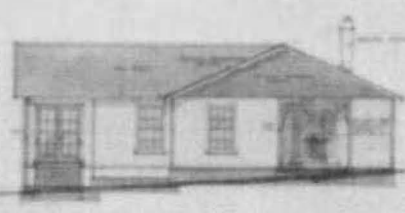
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WEST ELEVATION



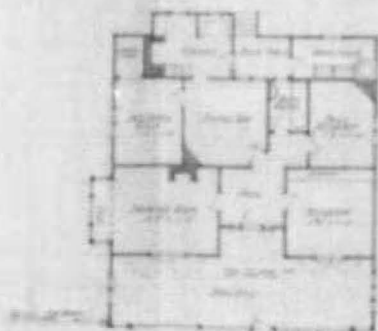
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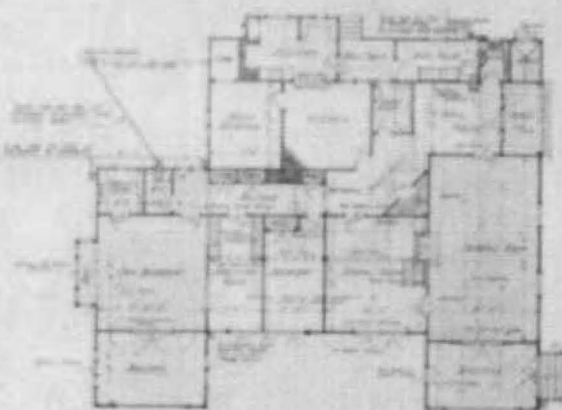
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WEST ELEVATION



PLAN OF BUILDING



PLAN

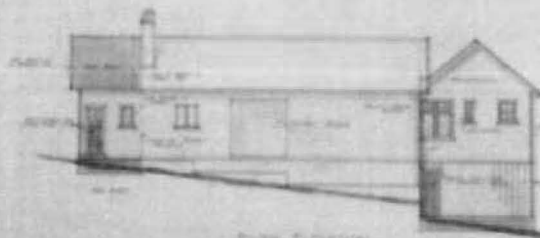
PLAN



WEST ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION

NOTES ON THE DRAWING

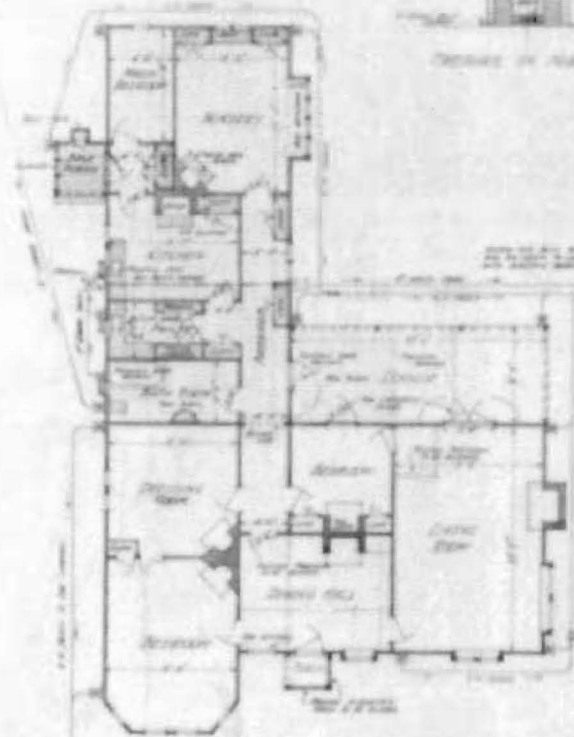
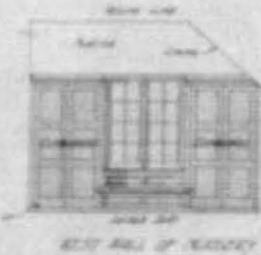
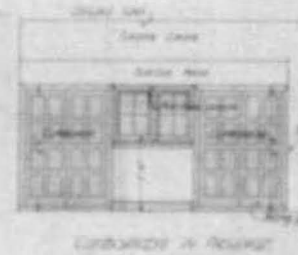
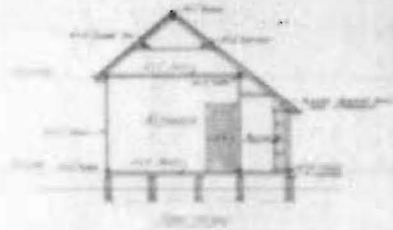
See Chapter 1, page 1

NOTES ON THE DRAWING

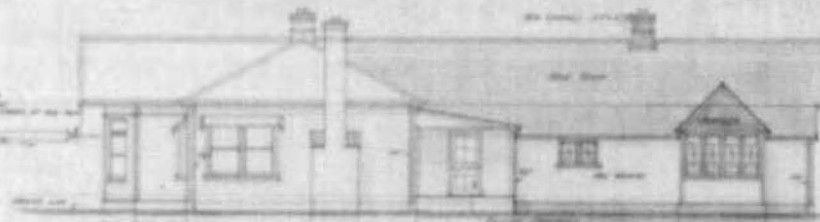


DESIGNS & ALTERATIONS  
TO  
HOUSE MARKET ST. FENDALTON  
FOR  
H. HATTON ESQ

There is one of the drawings referred to  
in the contract which will be in the  
day of 18th 1911  
signed George Meek



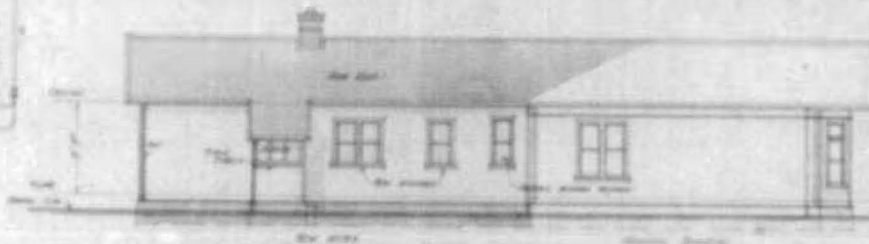
PLAN



NORTH ELEVATION



EAST ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION

DESIGNED BY GEORGE MEER  
21 F. BUILDINGS  
CITY ROAD, LONDON

479

479





21



22



23



24











# HOUSE OF TWO ANGLES WILLIAMSON

FOR  
J. H. WILLIAMSON 1877

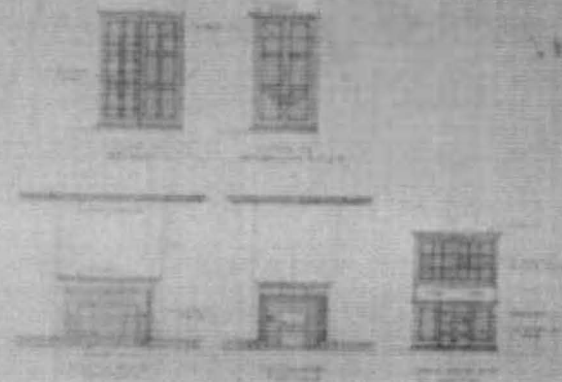
ARCHT. JOHN H. HARRIS 1877

The house was built during the year 1877  
and cost about \$10,000  
of July 1877

James S. Searles  
H. H. Searles



FRONT ELEVATION



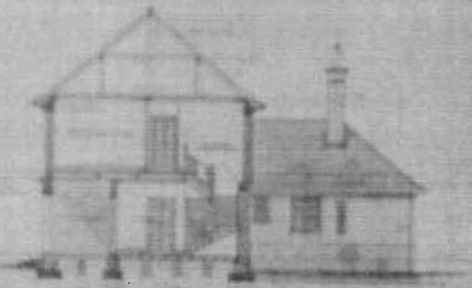
SIDE ELEVATION



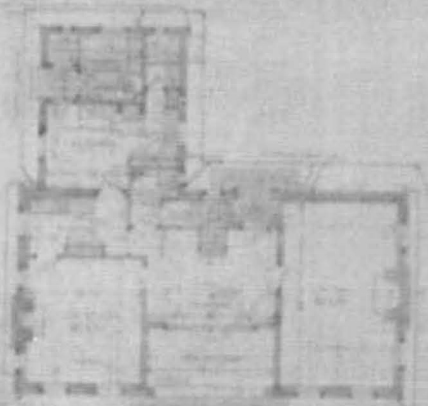
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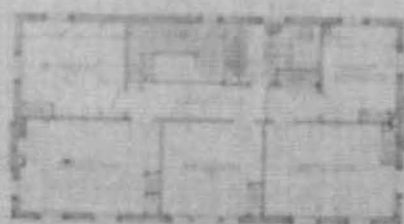
SIDE ELEVATION



SIDE ELEVATION



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



SECOND FLOOR PLAN



SIDE ELEVATION

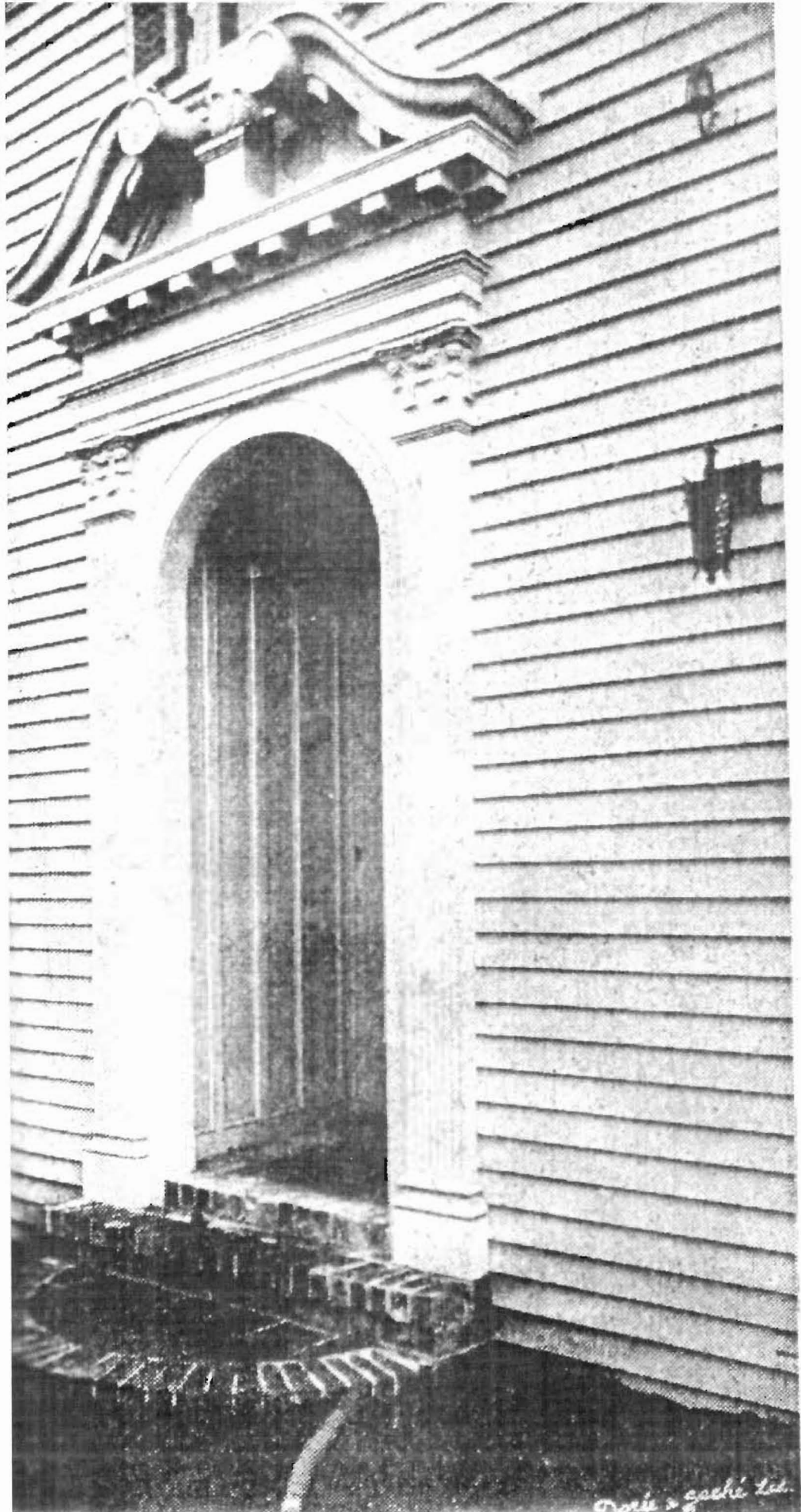
196





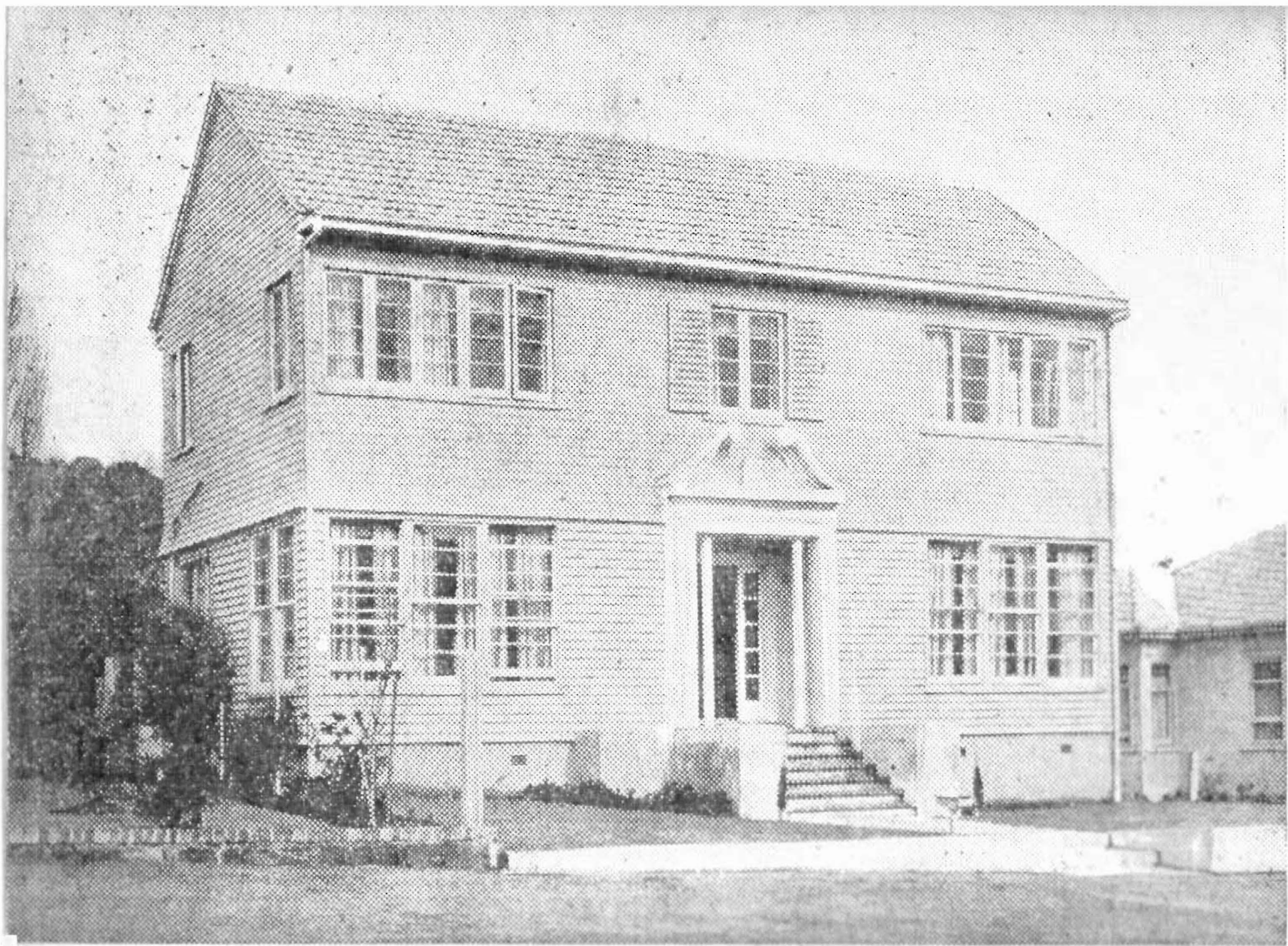






*Don't & gashé tel.*



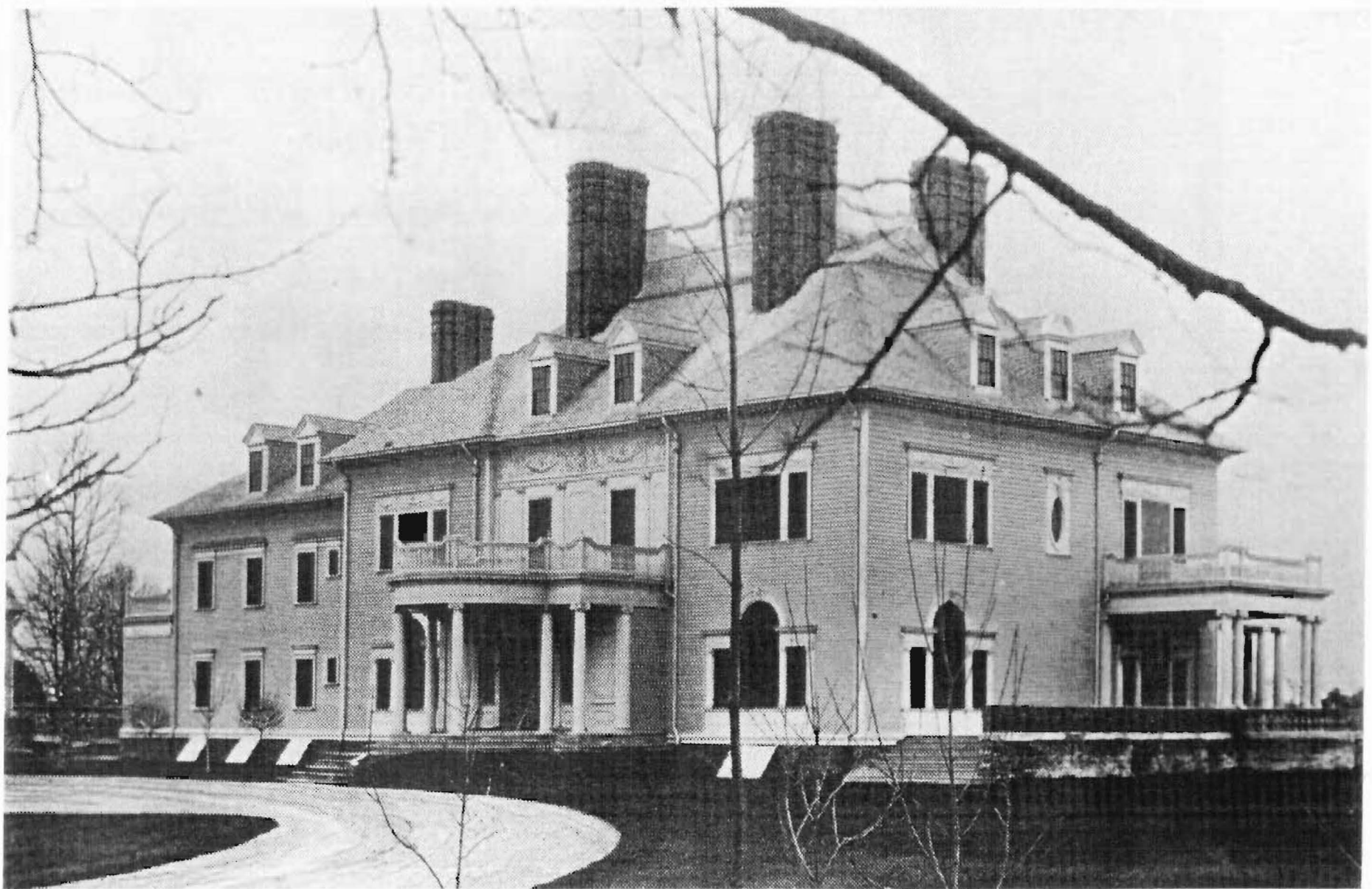










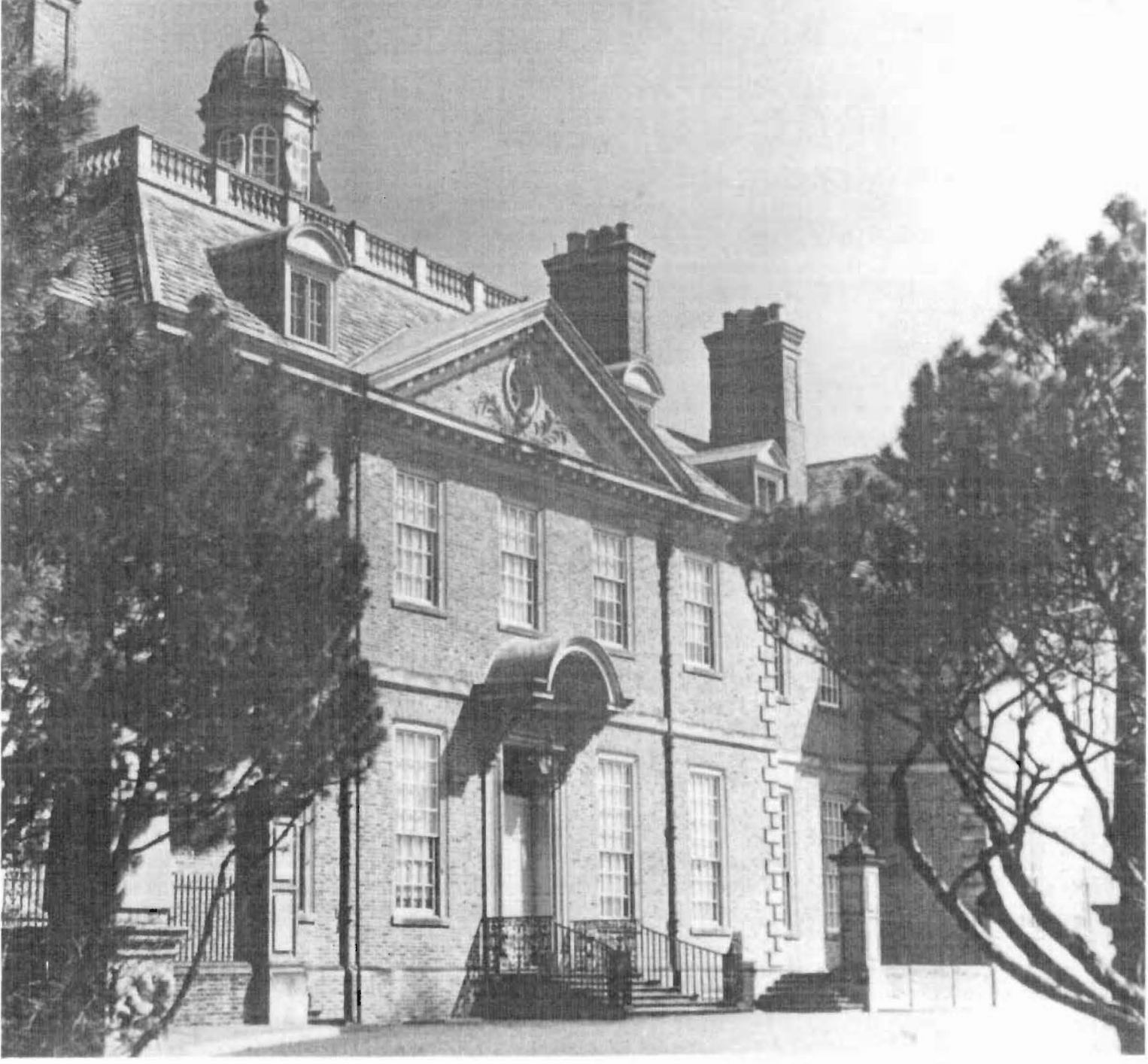


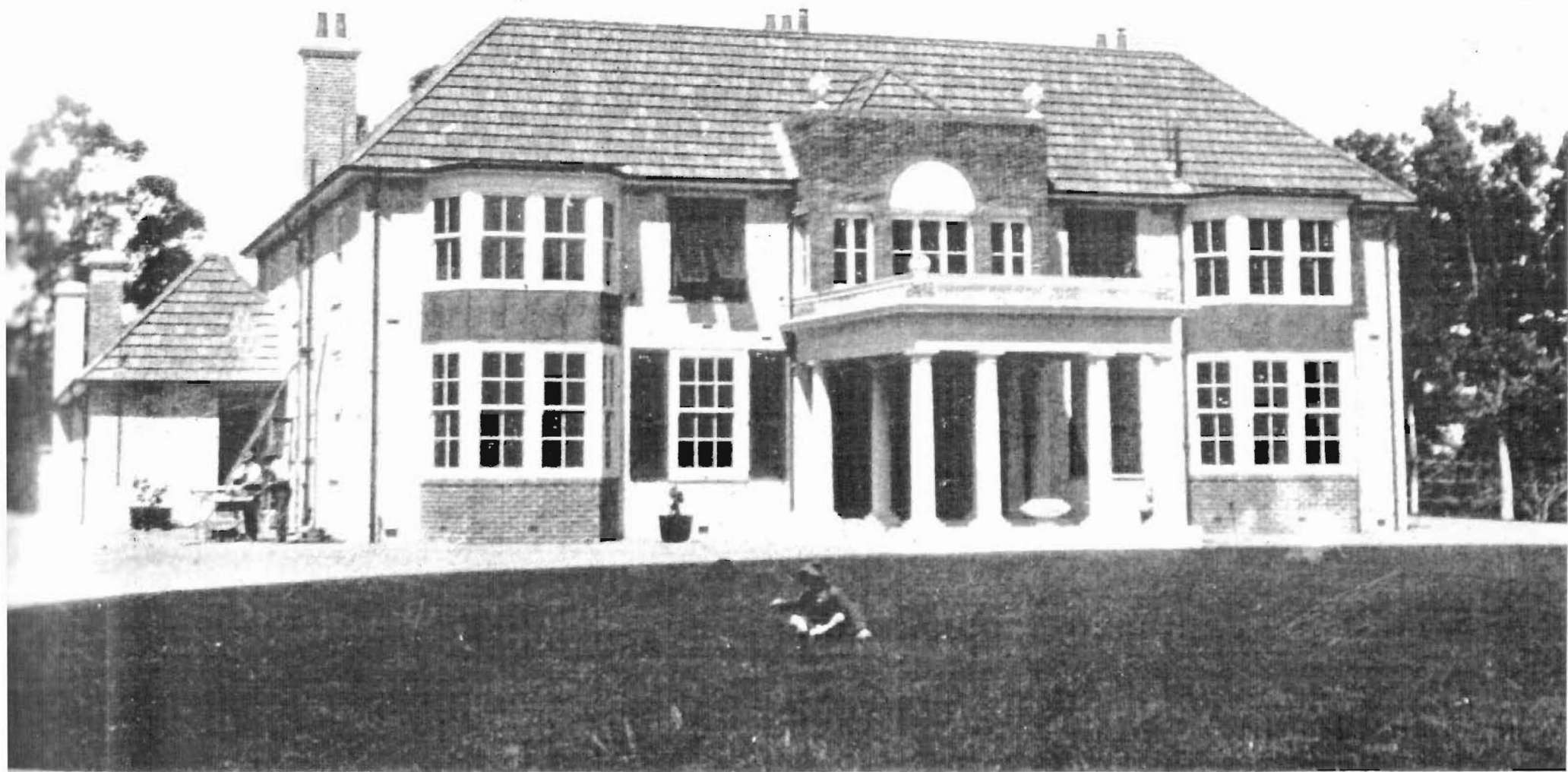






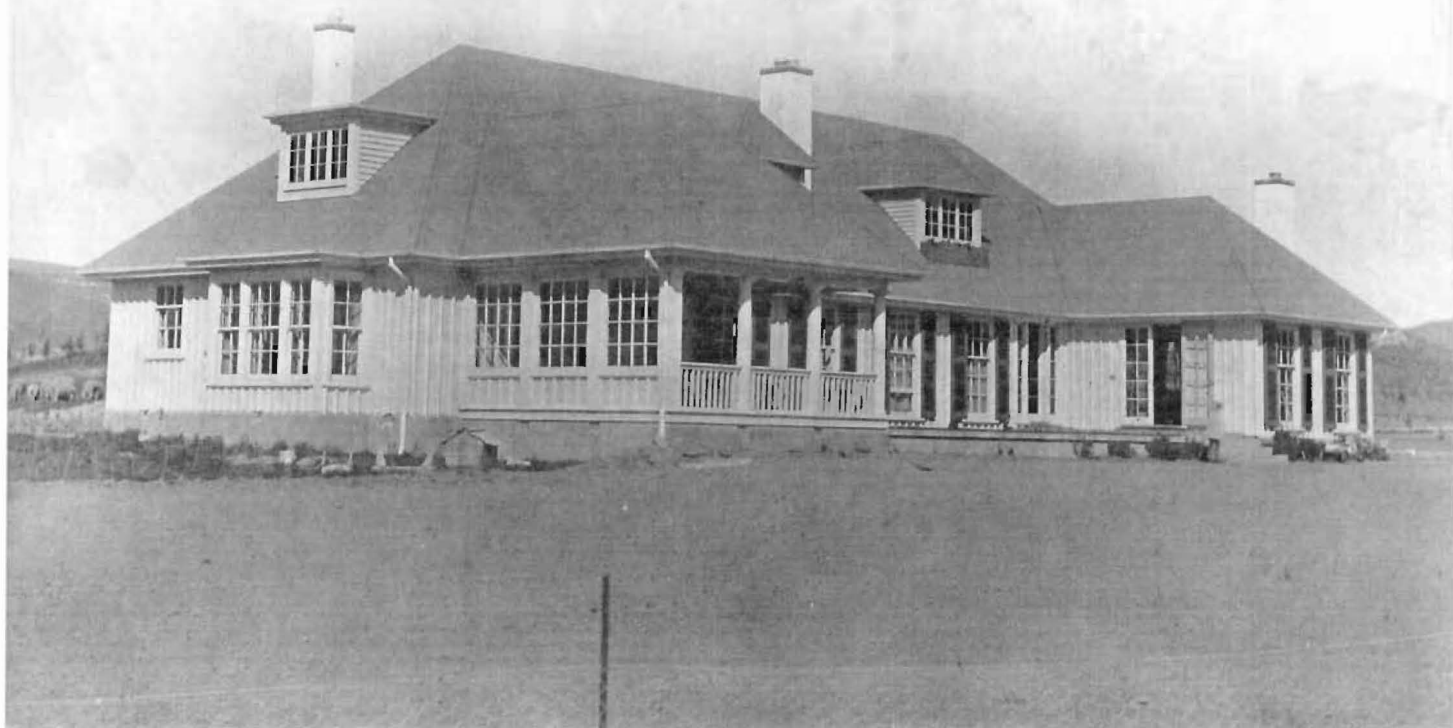












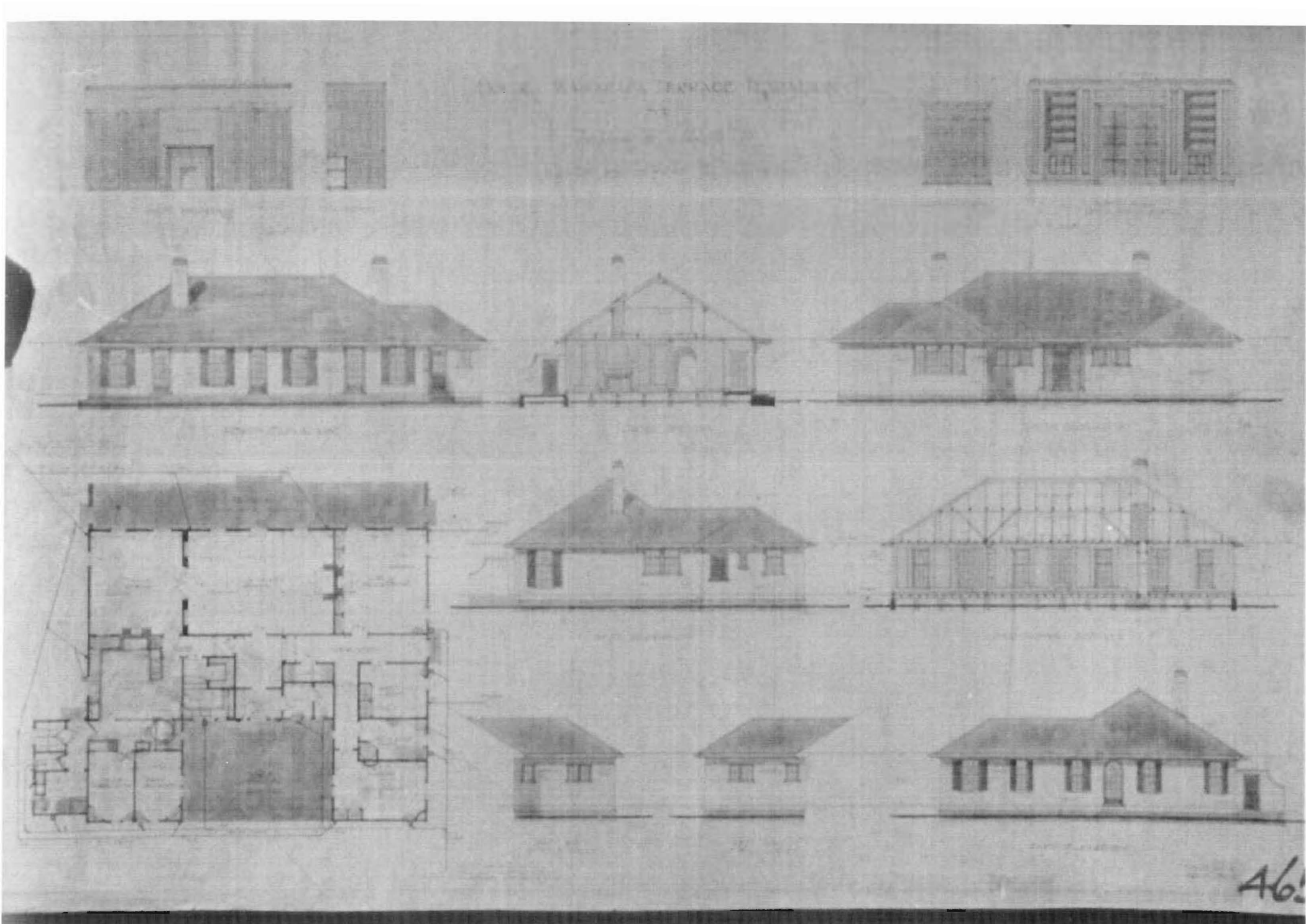
43



44

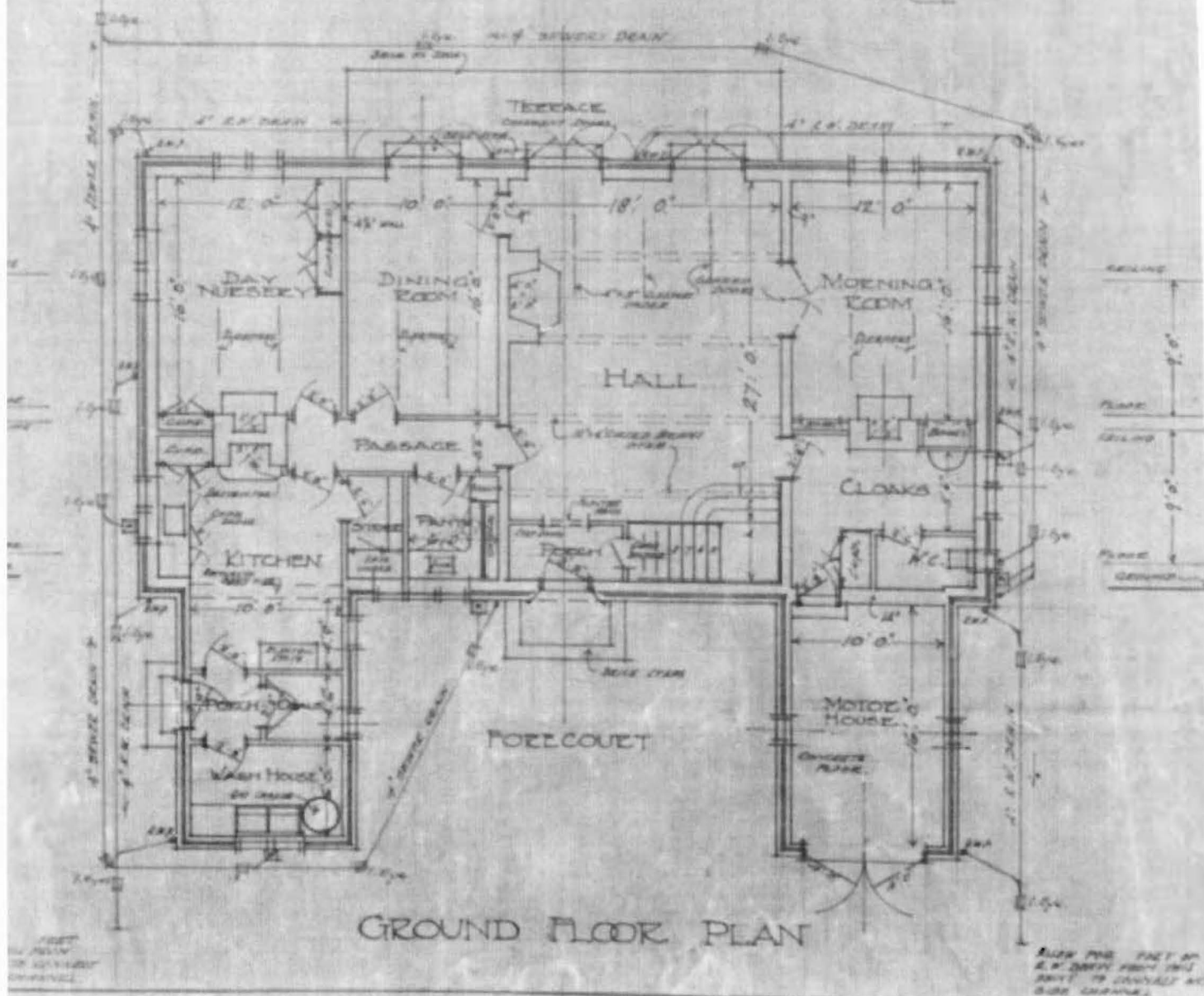
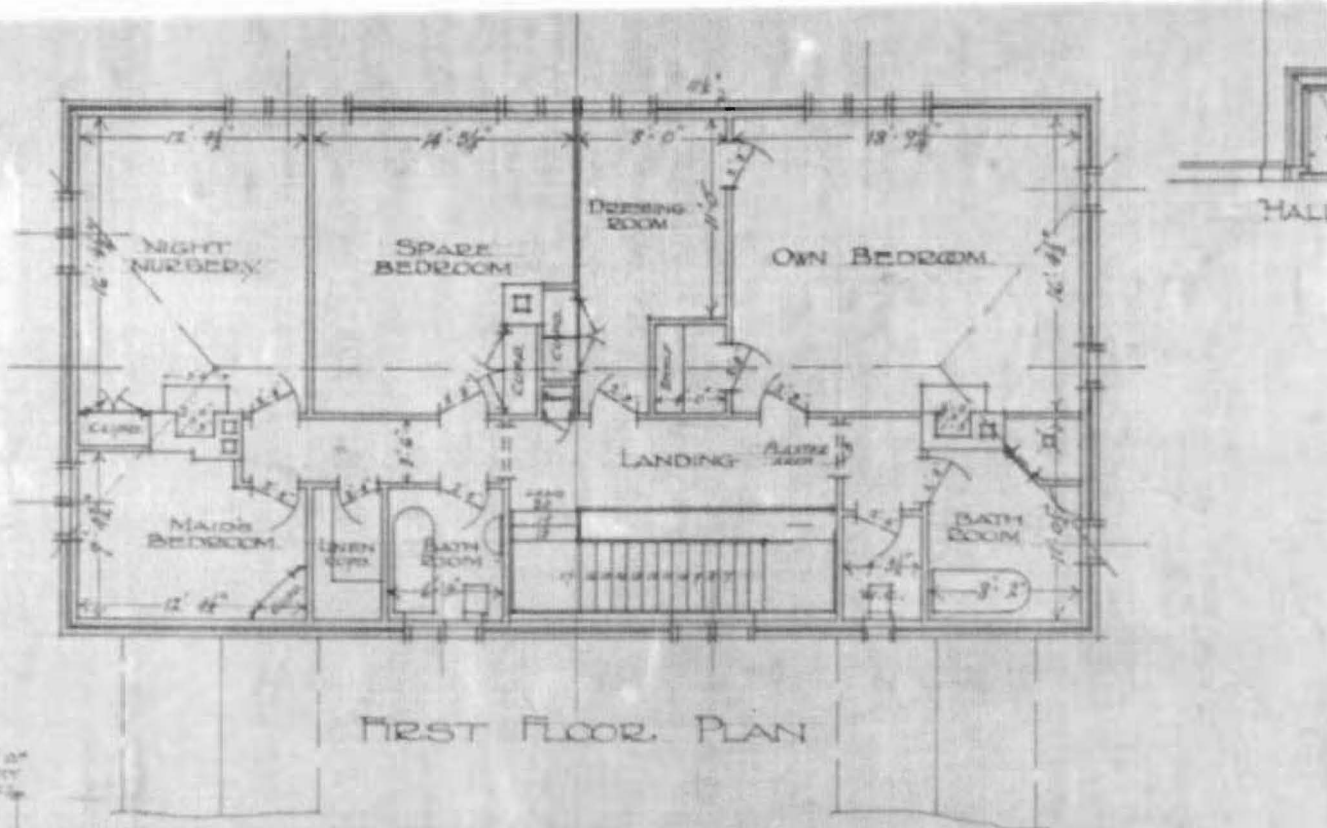














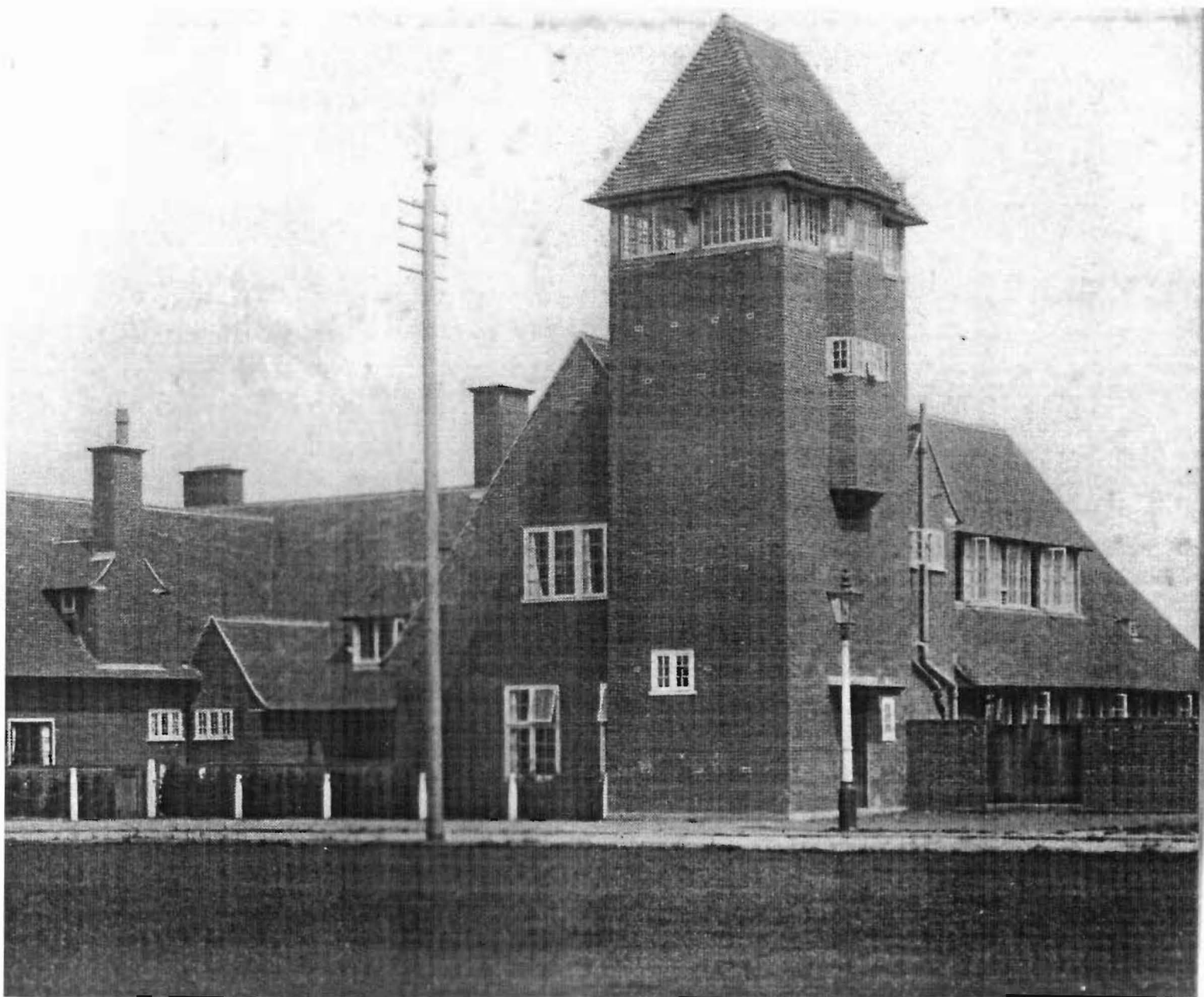








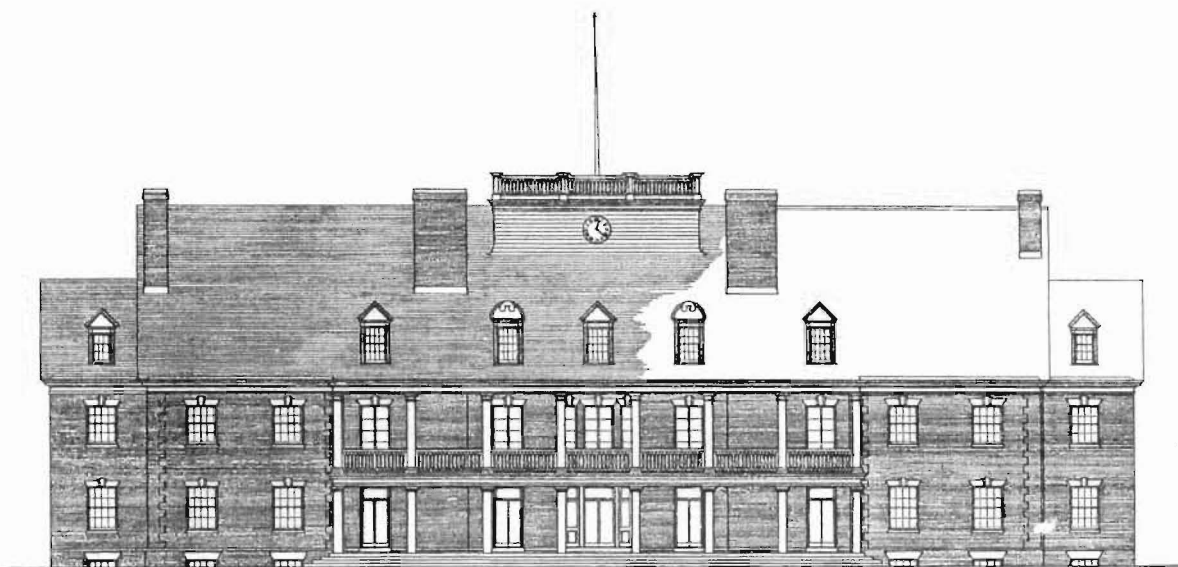




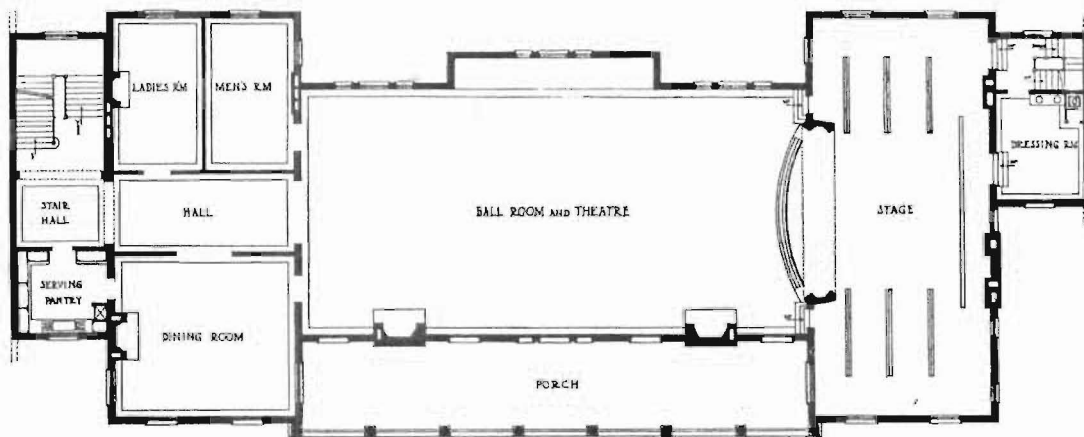




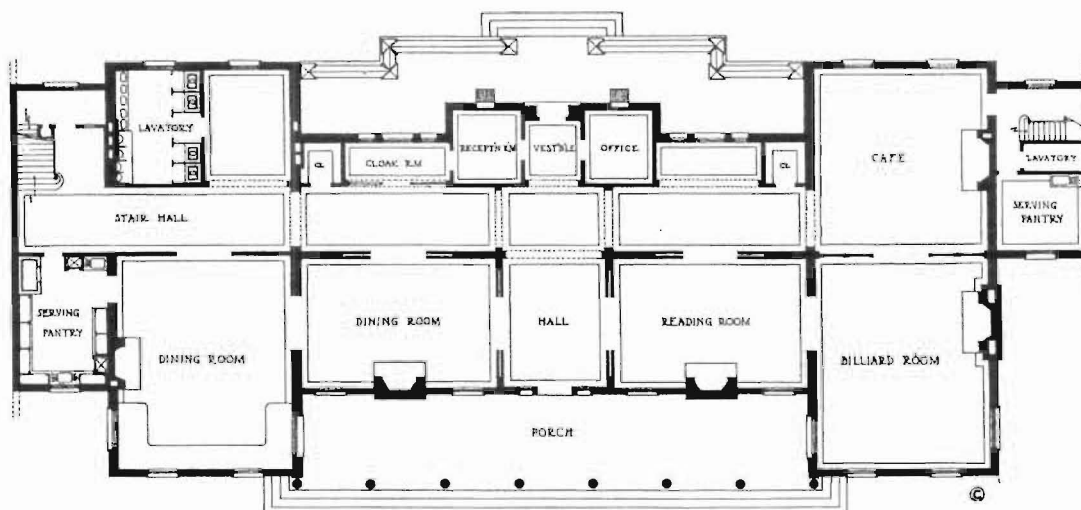
MCKIM, MEAD &amp; WHITE



ELEVATION



SECOND FLOOR PLAN



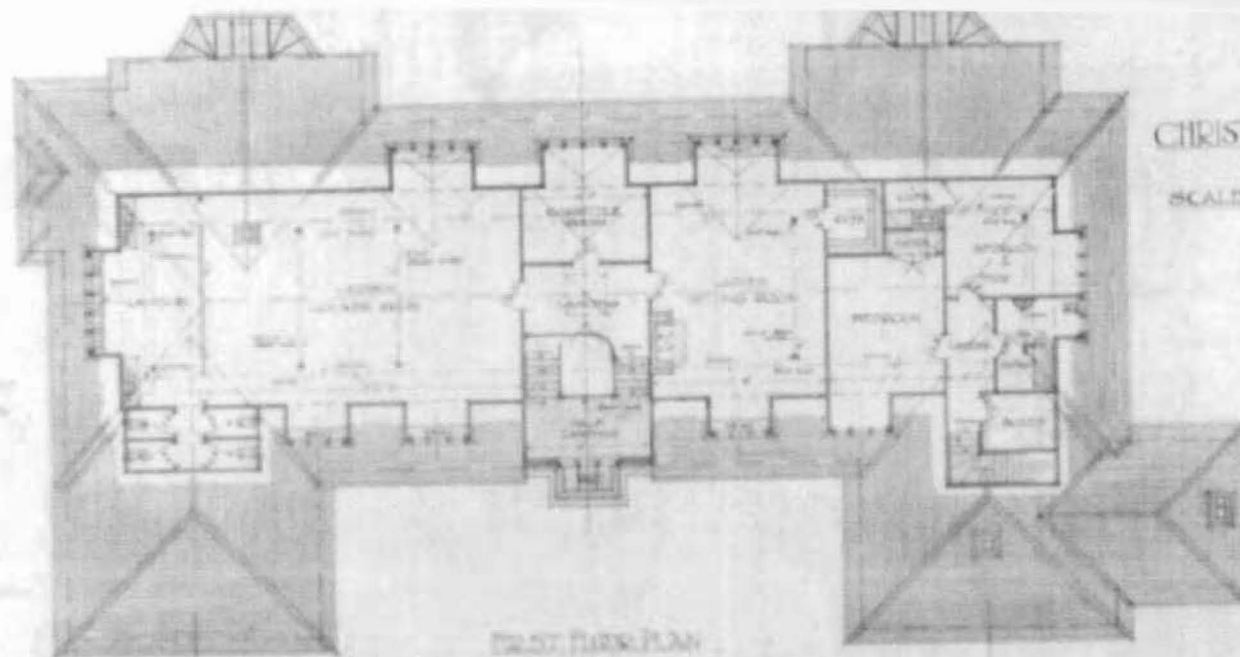
SCALE 0 5 10 20 30 40 50 FEET

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

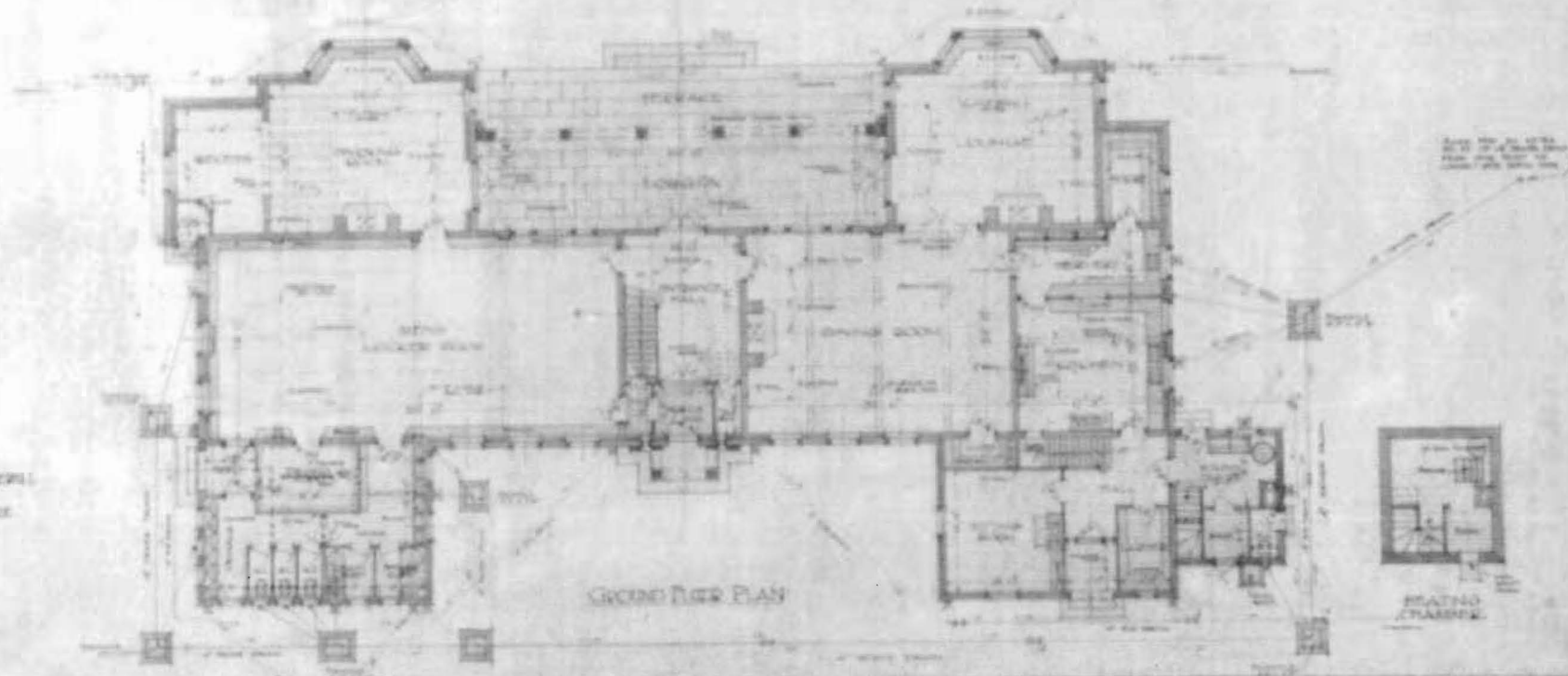
GERMANTOWN CRICKET CLUB, PHILADELPHIA, PA.  
1891

NEW CLUB HOUSE  
SURLEY  
CHRISTCHURCH

FOR THE  
CHRISTCHURCH GOLF CLUB  
SCALE: ENIT. FEET TO THE INCH



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

MILNER & CUTLER  
ARCHITECTS  
CATHEDRAL SQUARE



READING CHAIRS













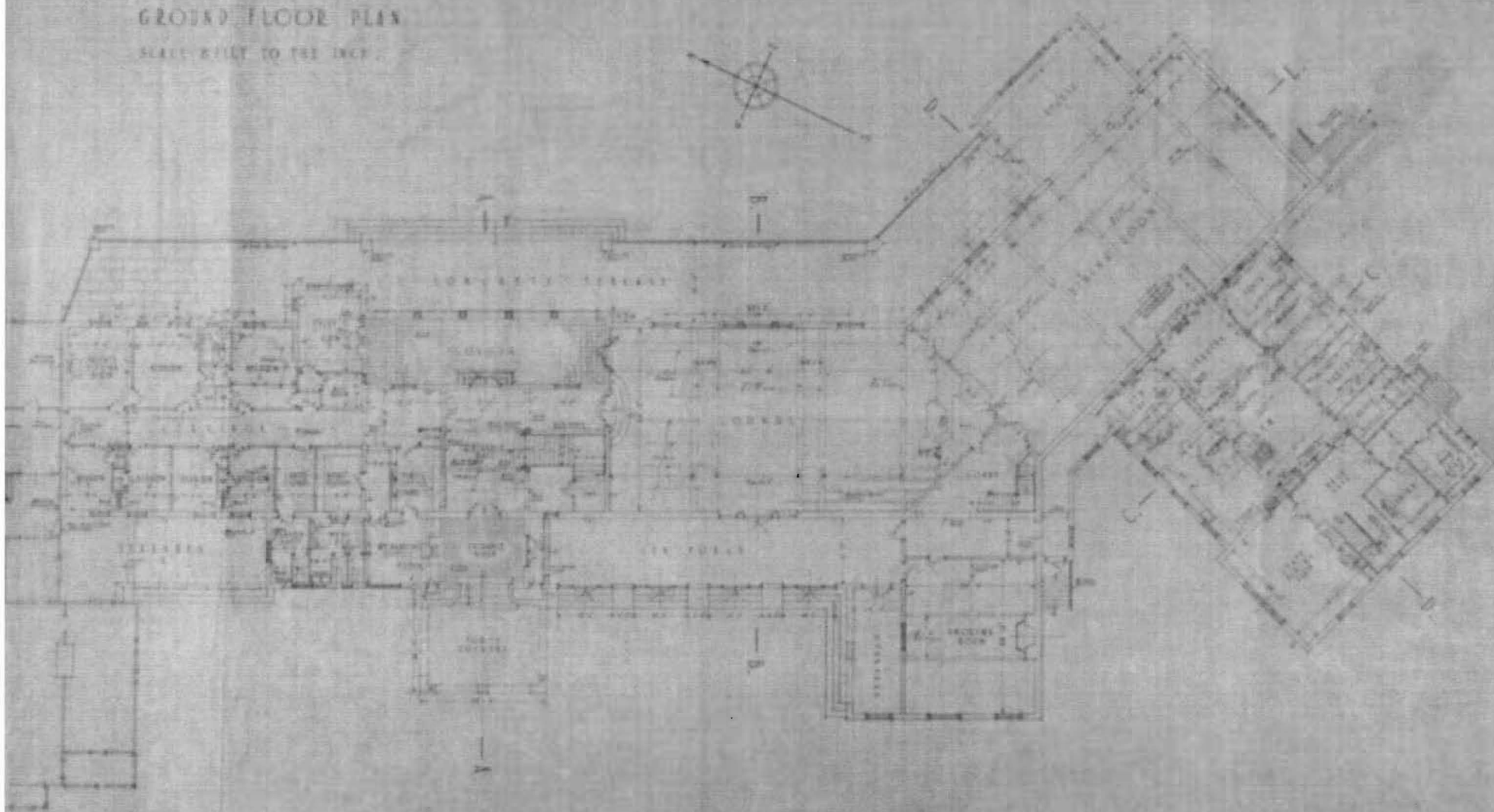


# THE LODGE, HAMMER SPRINGS

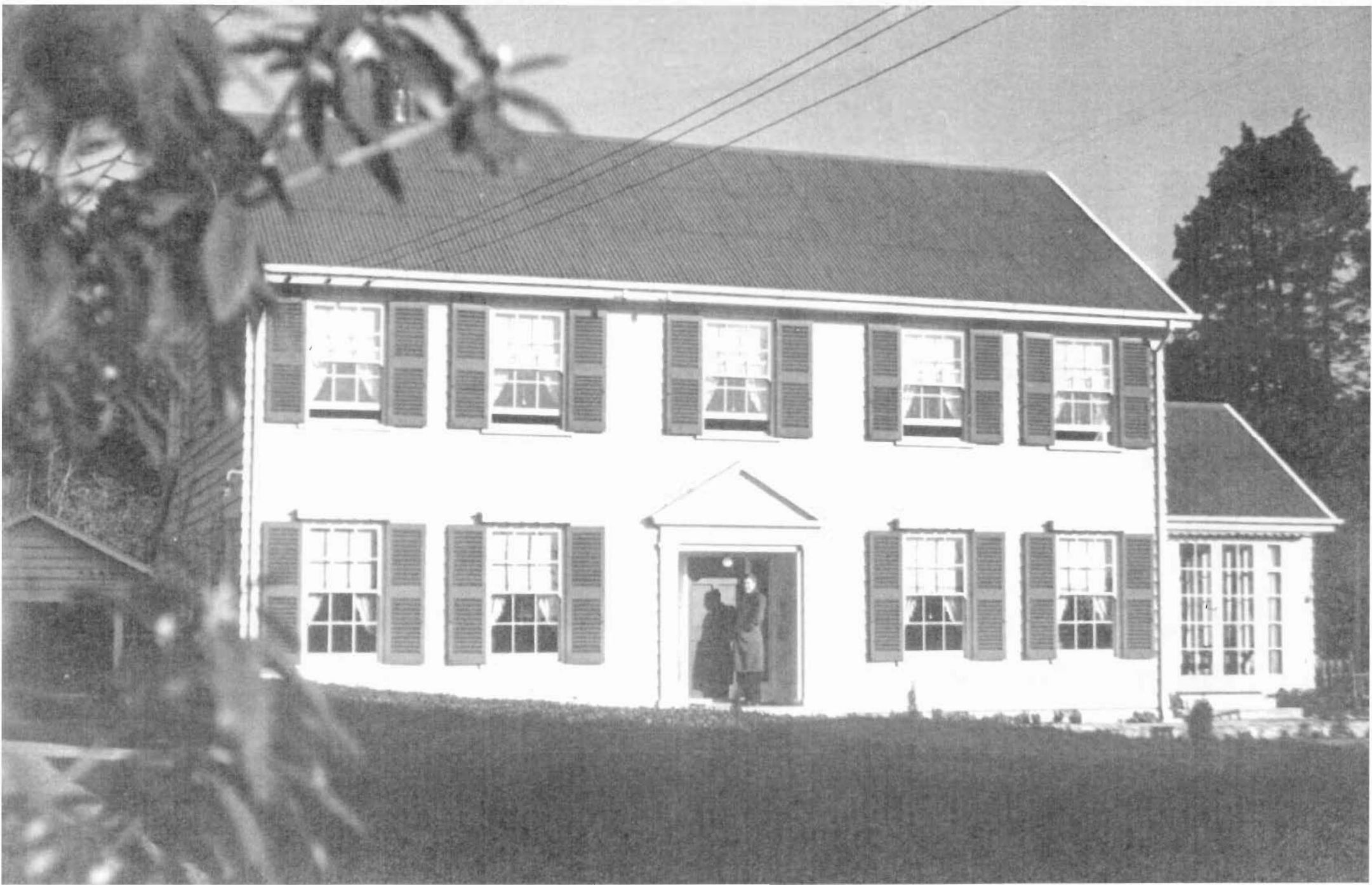
## GROUND FLOOR PLAN

SCALE: HALF TO THE INCH

SHEET (1)



HEWLETT & CO. LTD.  
ARCHITECTS  
LONDON





















70

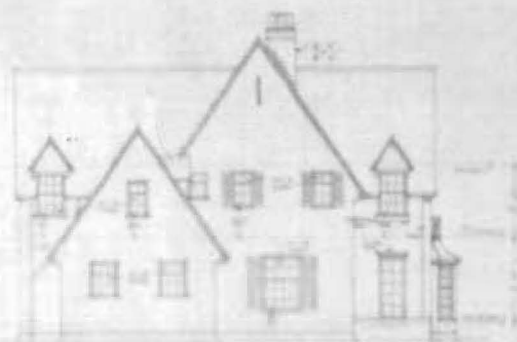


71









EAST ELEVATION



SIDE ELEVATION



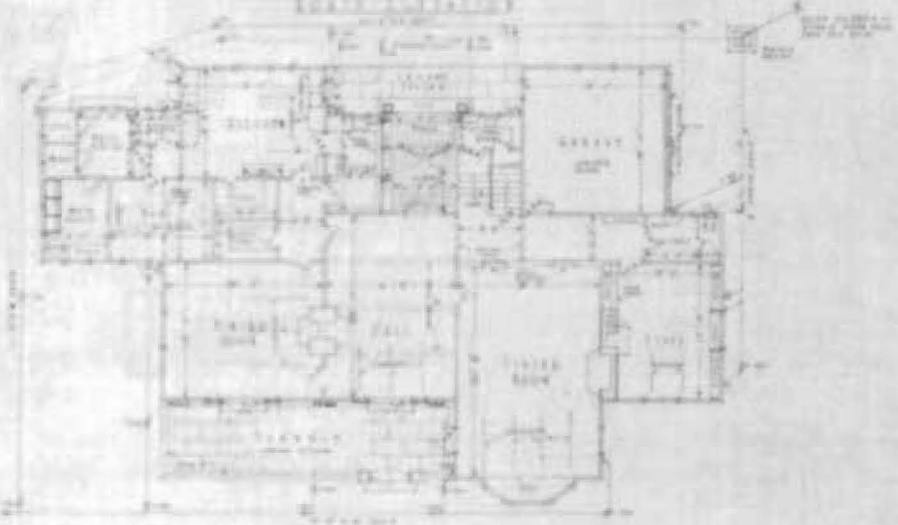
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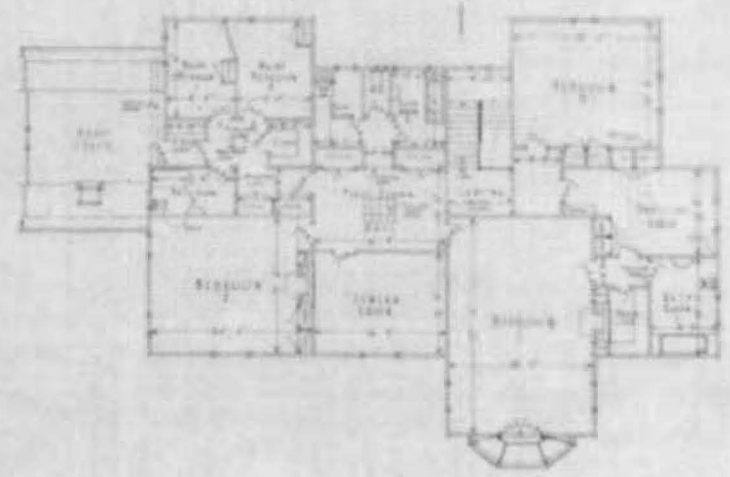
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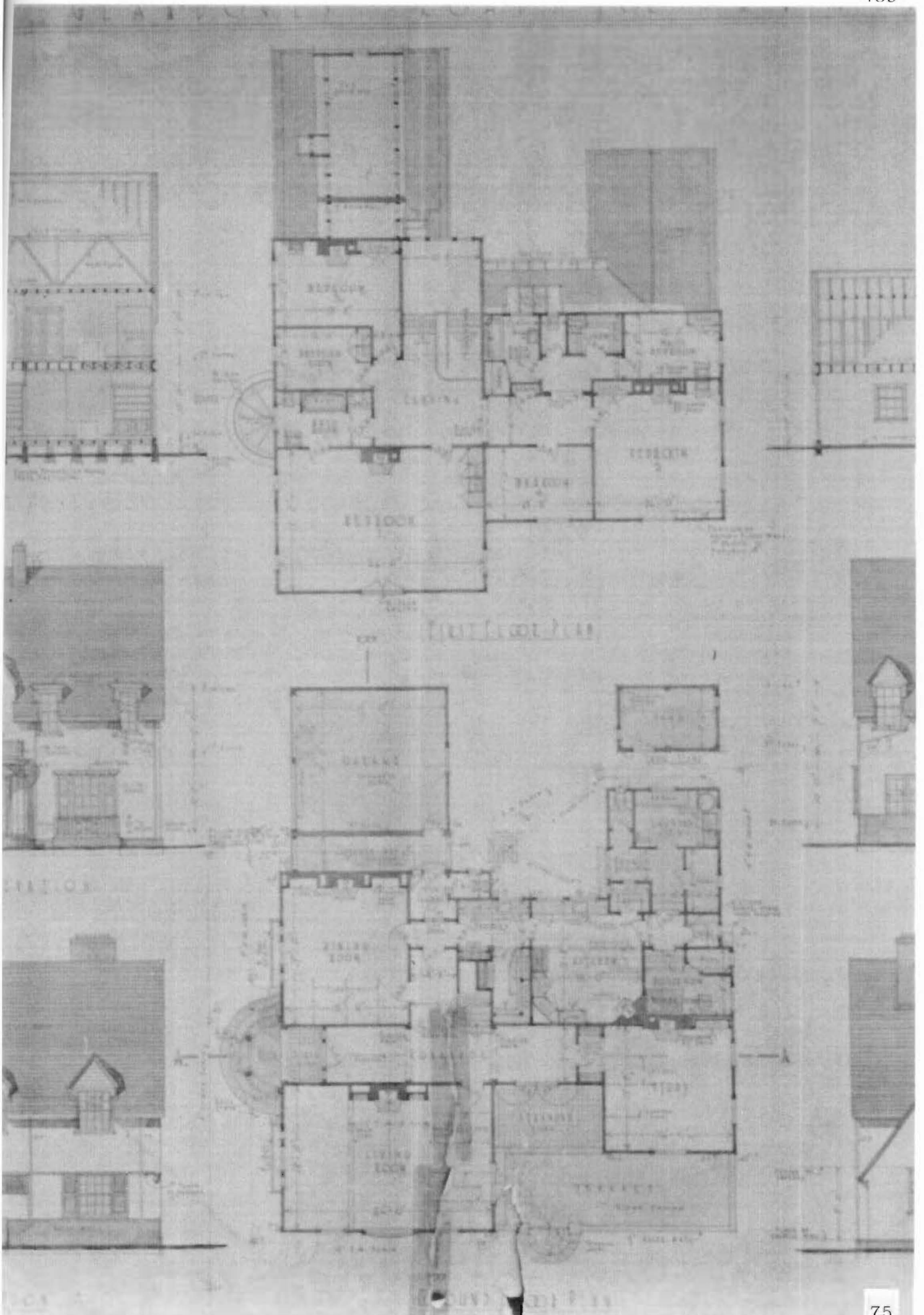
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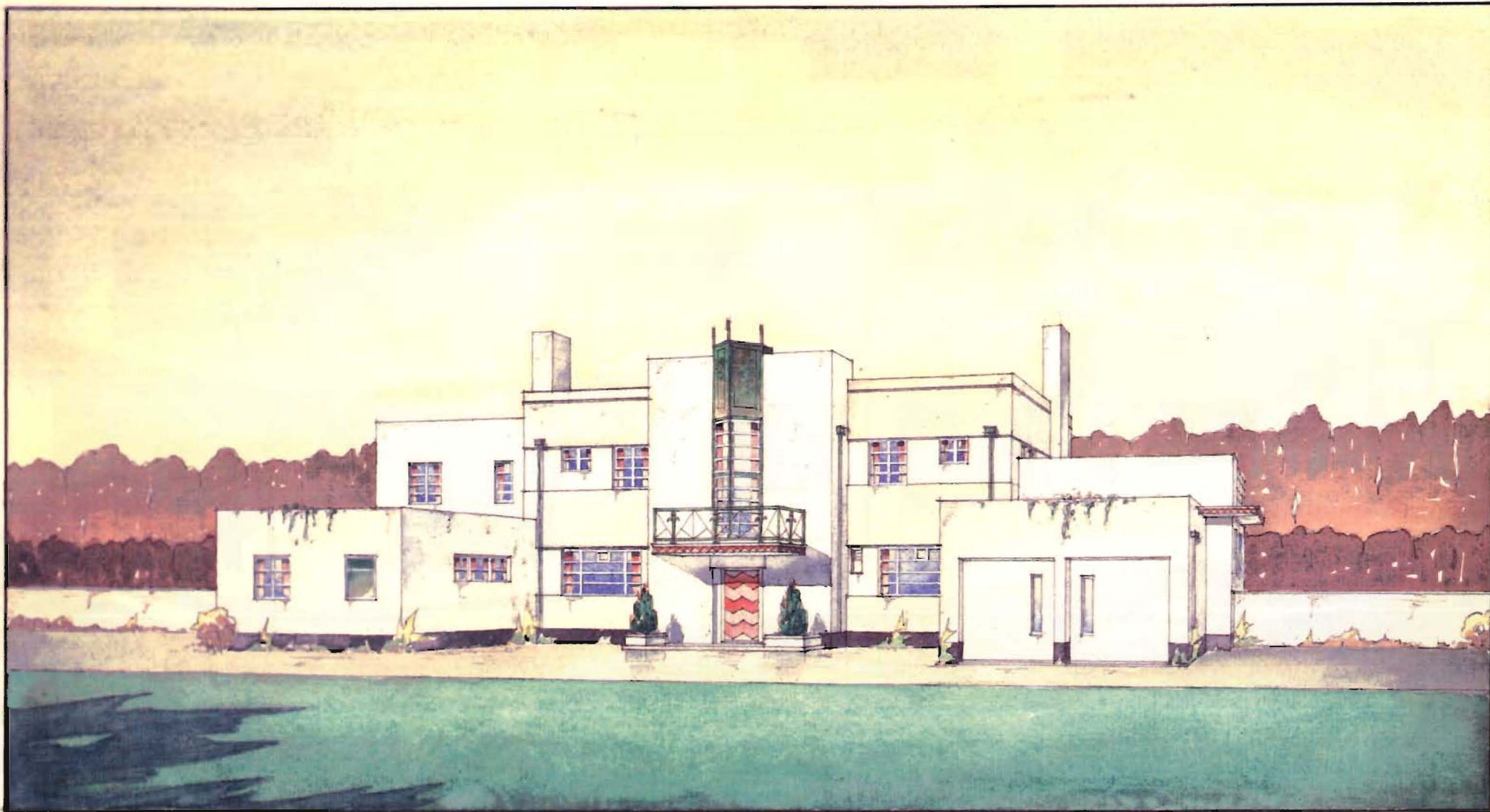
GROUND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



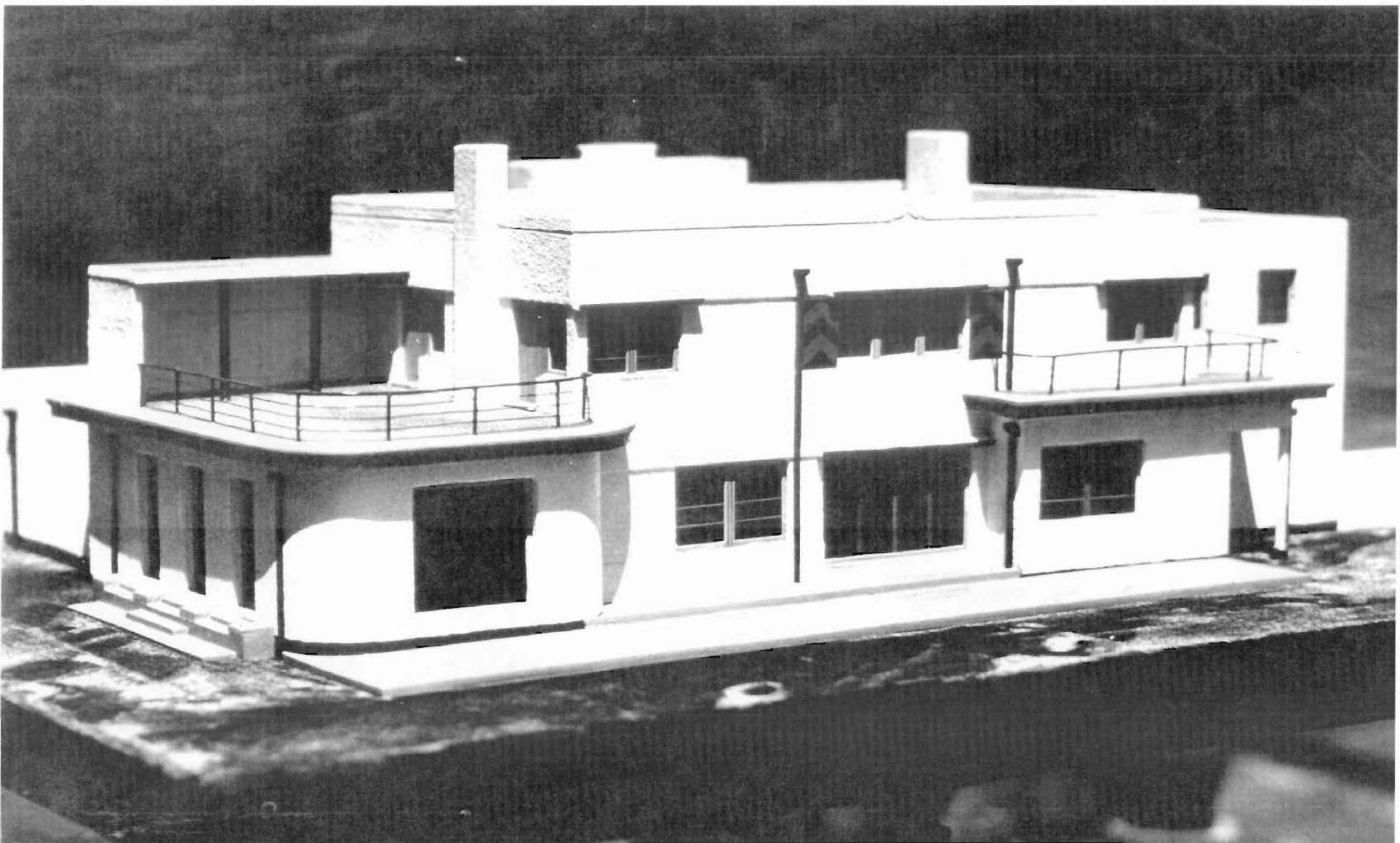


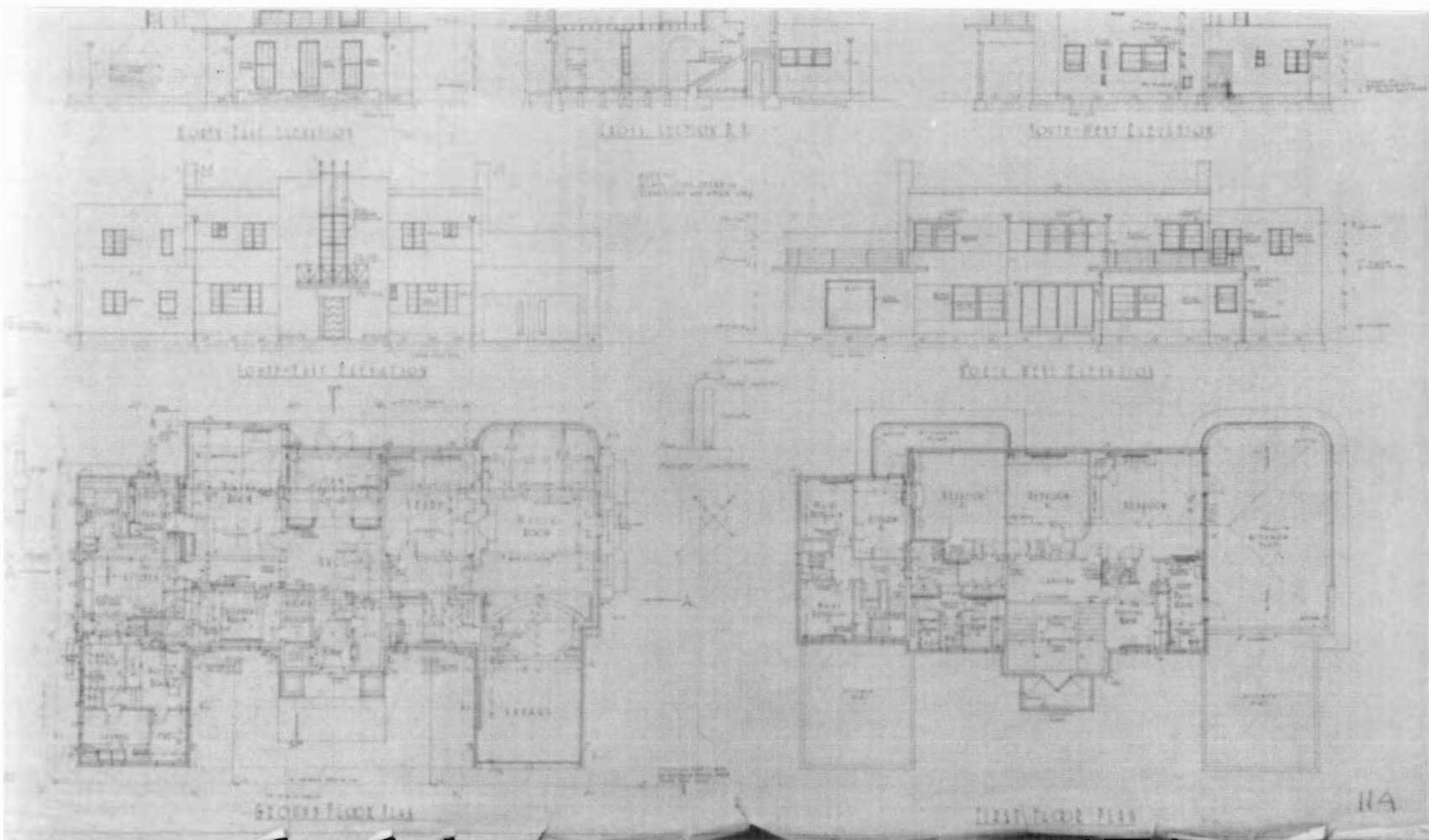


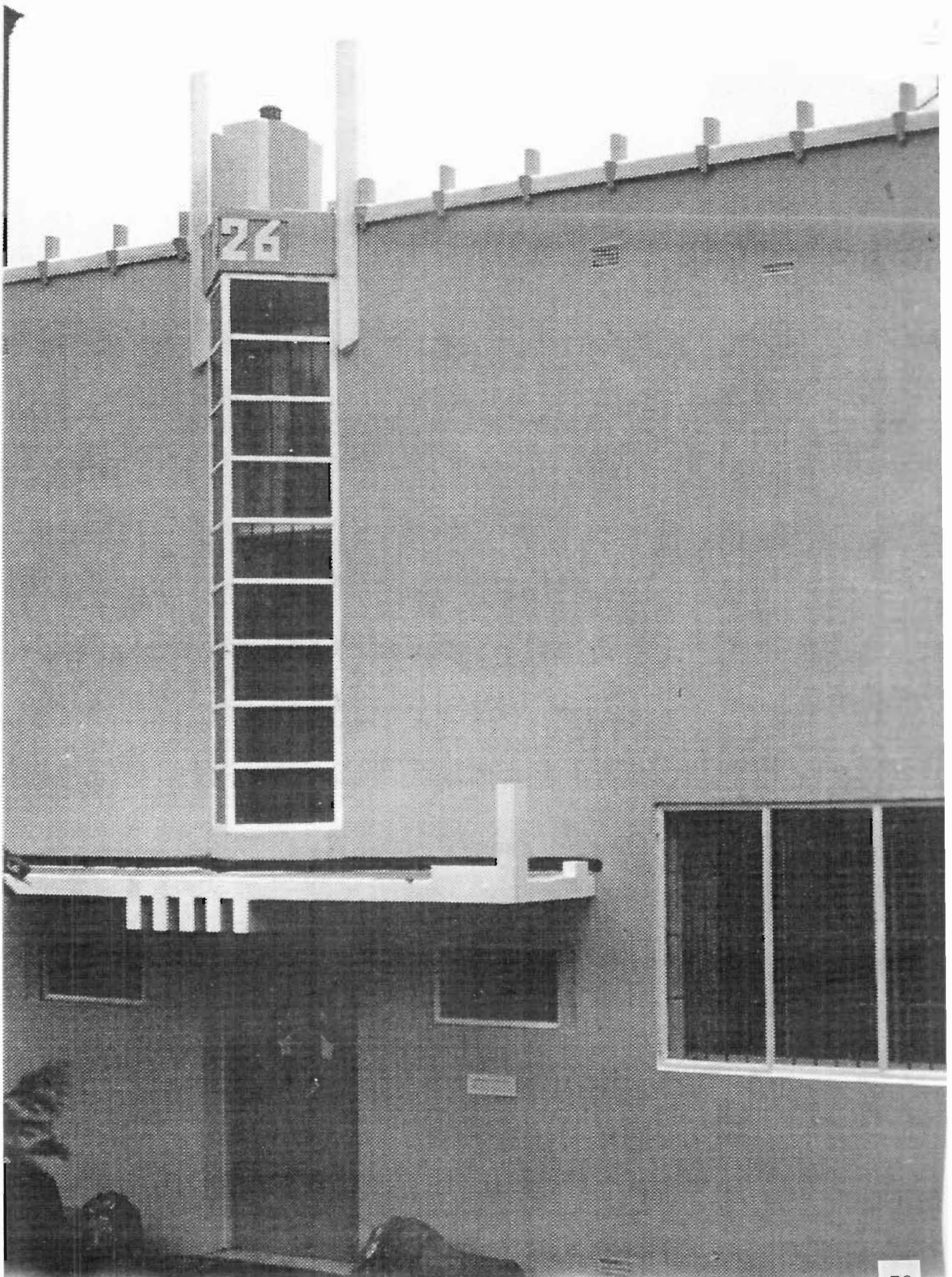
· HELMORE · & · COTTERILL · ARCHITECTS ·

· B. S. Smyth · DELT. · 1933 ·

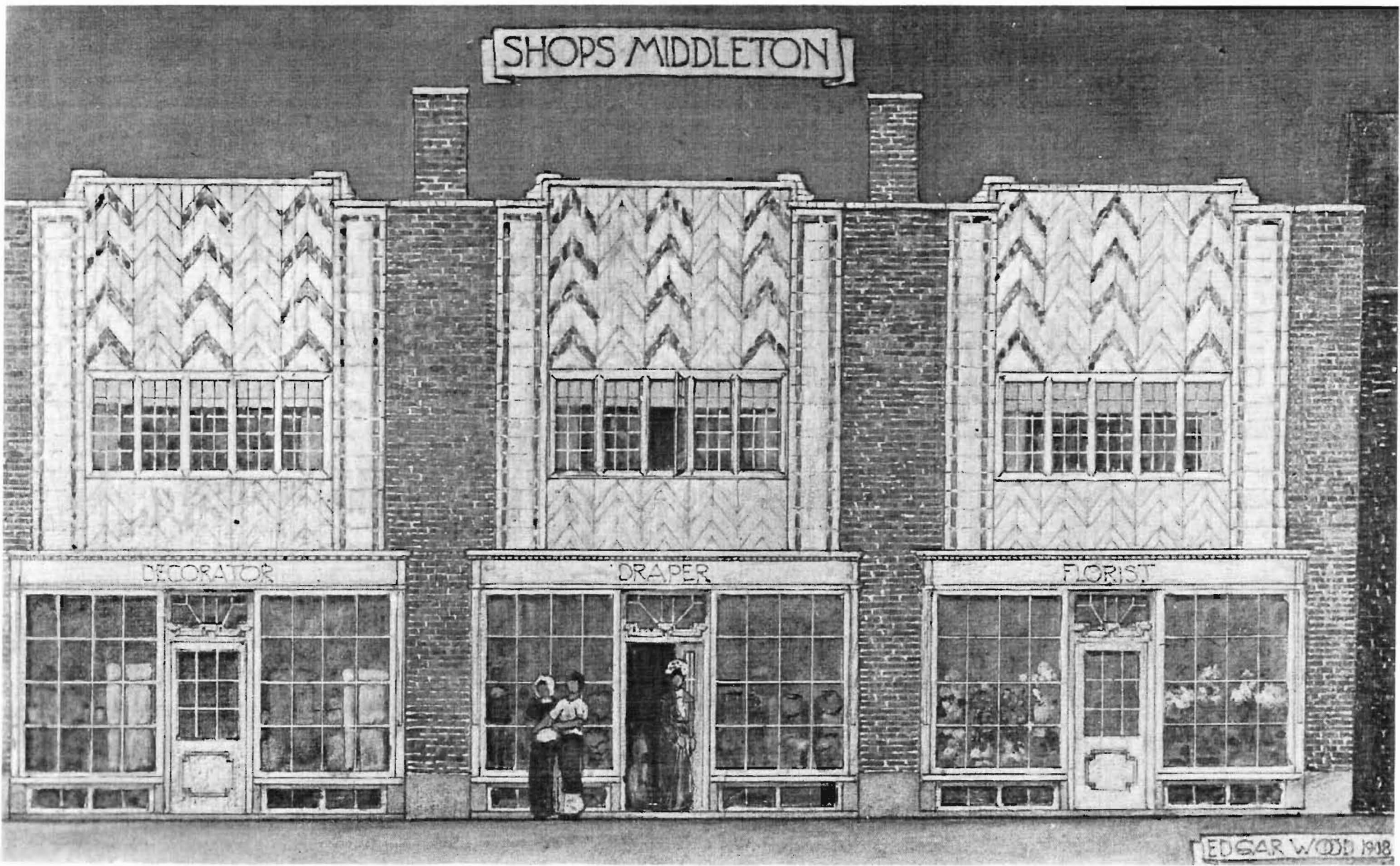


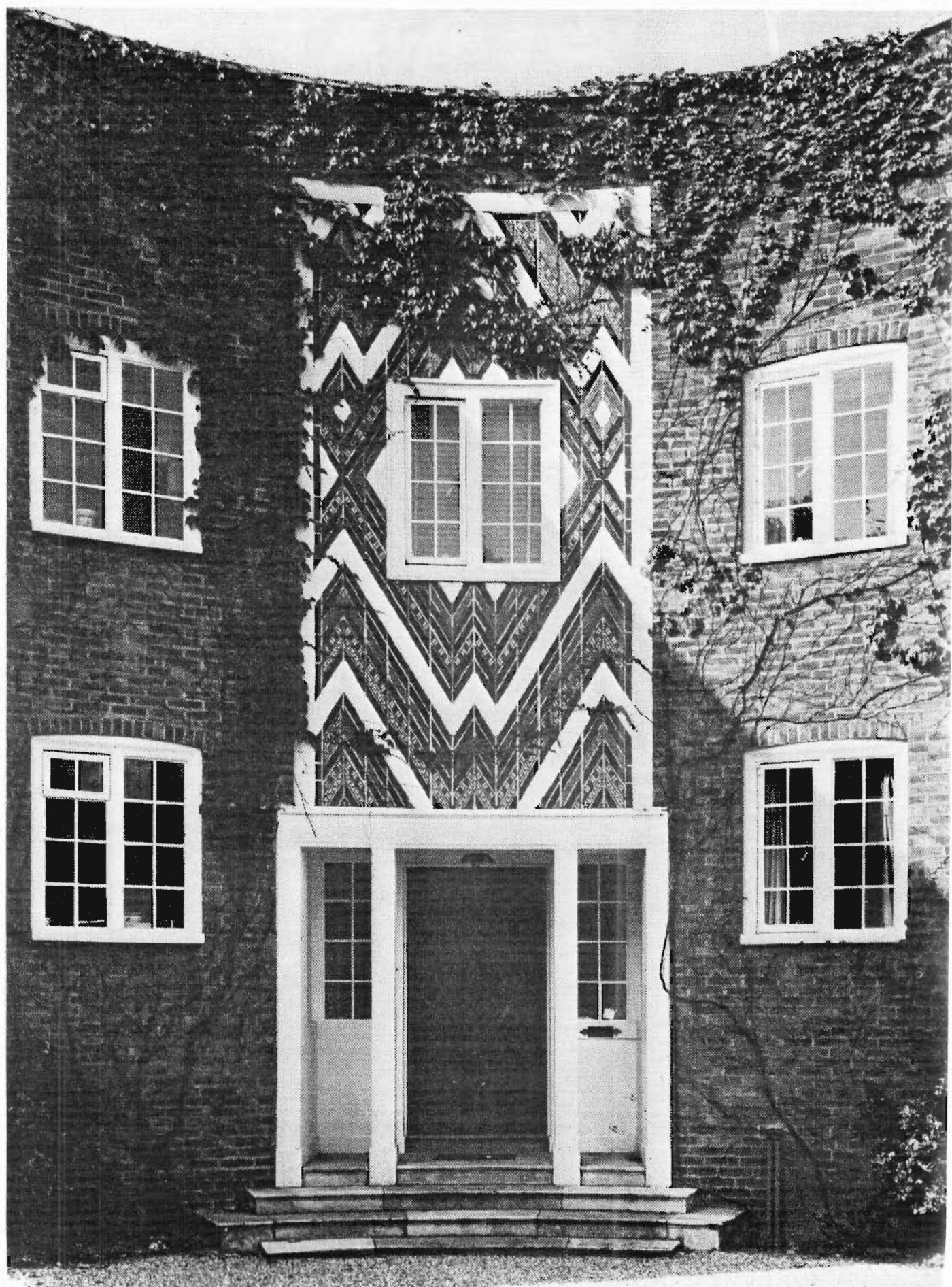










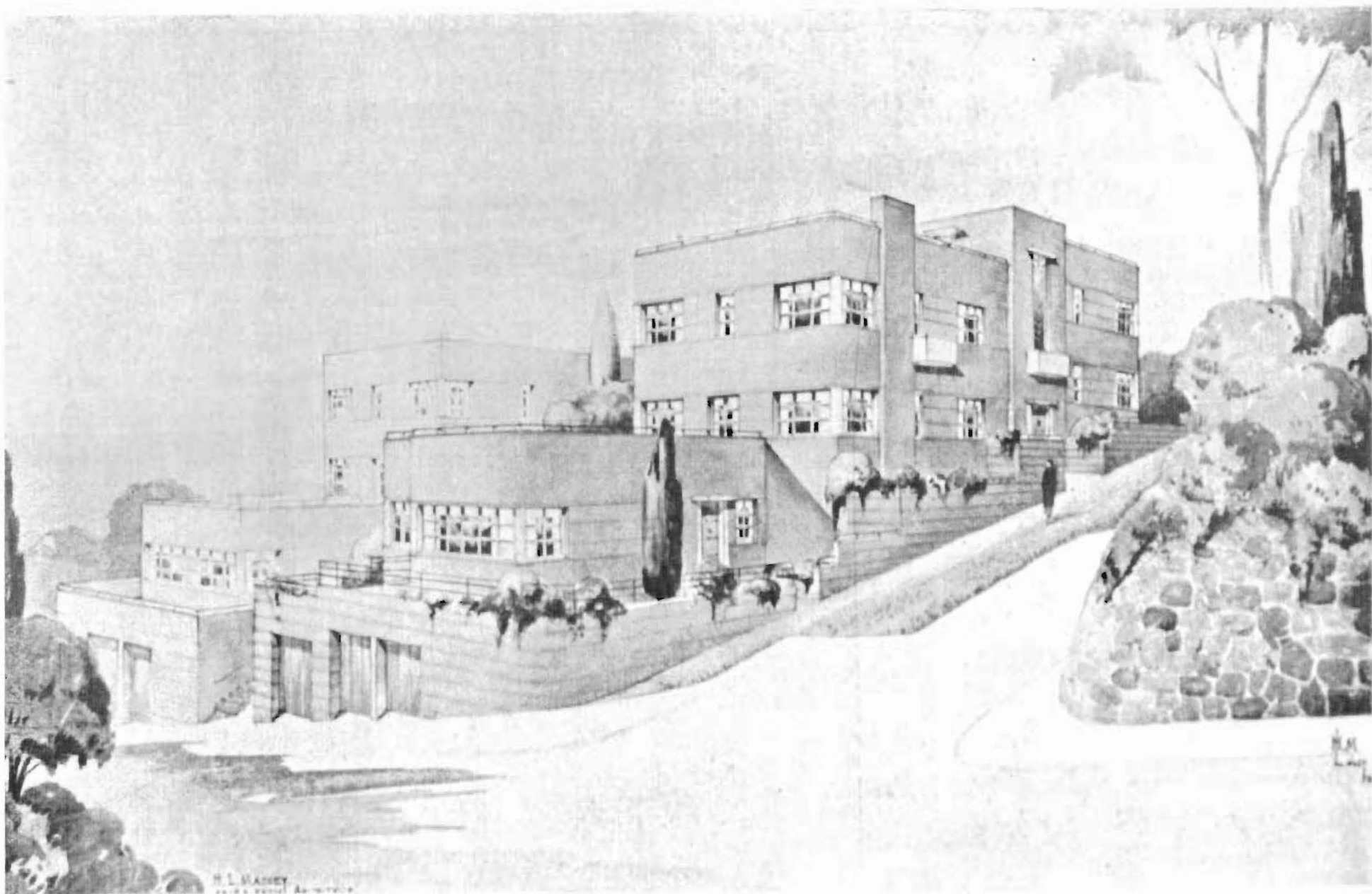


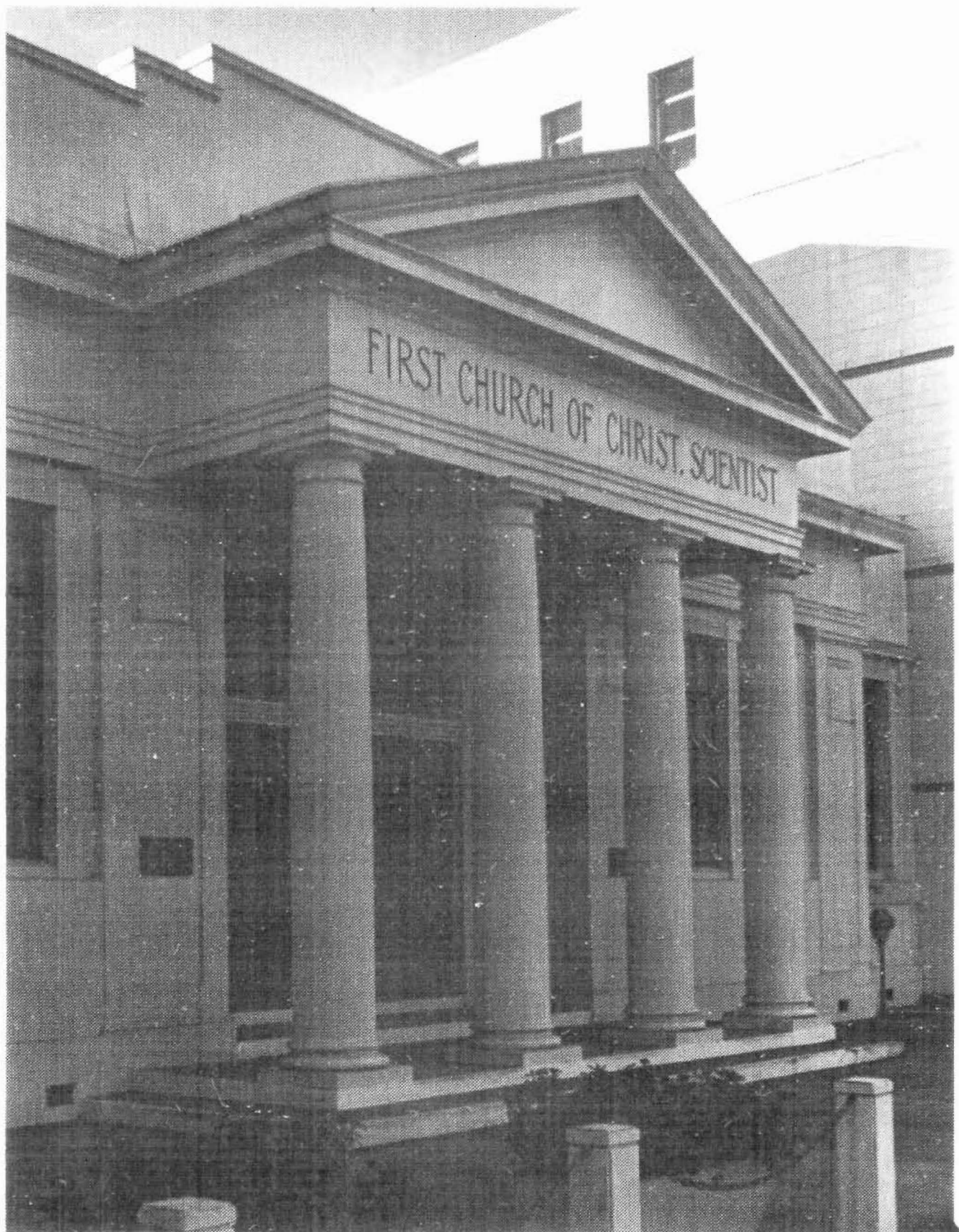


















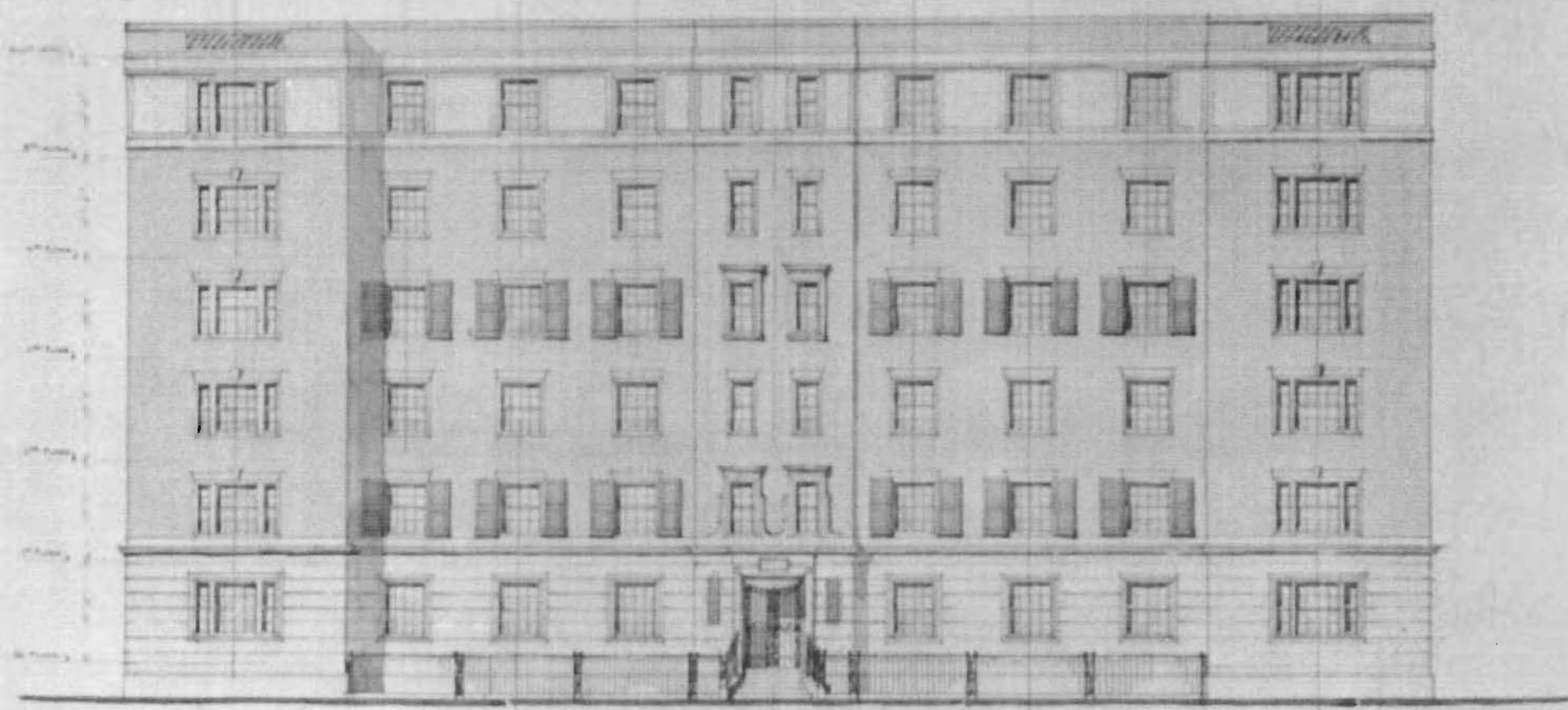




# PROPOSED BLOCK OF FLATS

GLOUCESTER STREET

SCALE EIGHT FEET TO THE INCH



NORTH ELEVATION



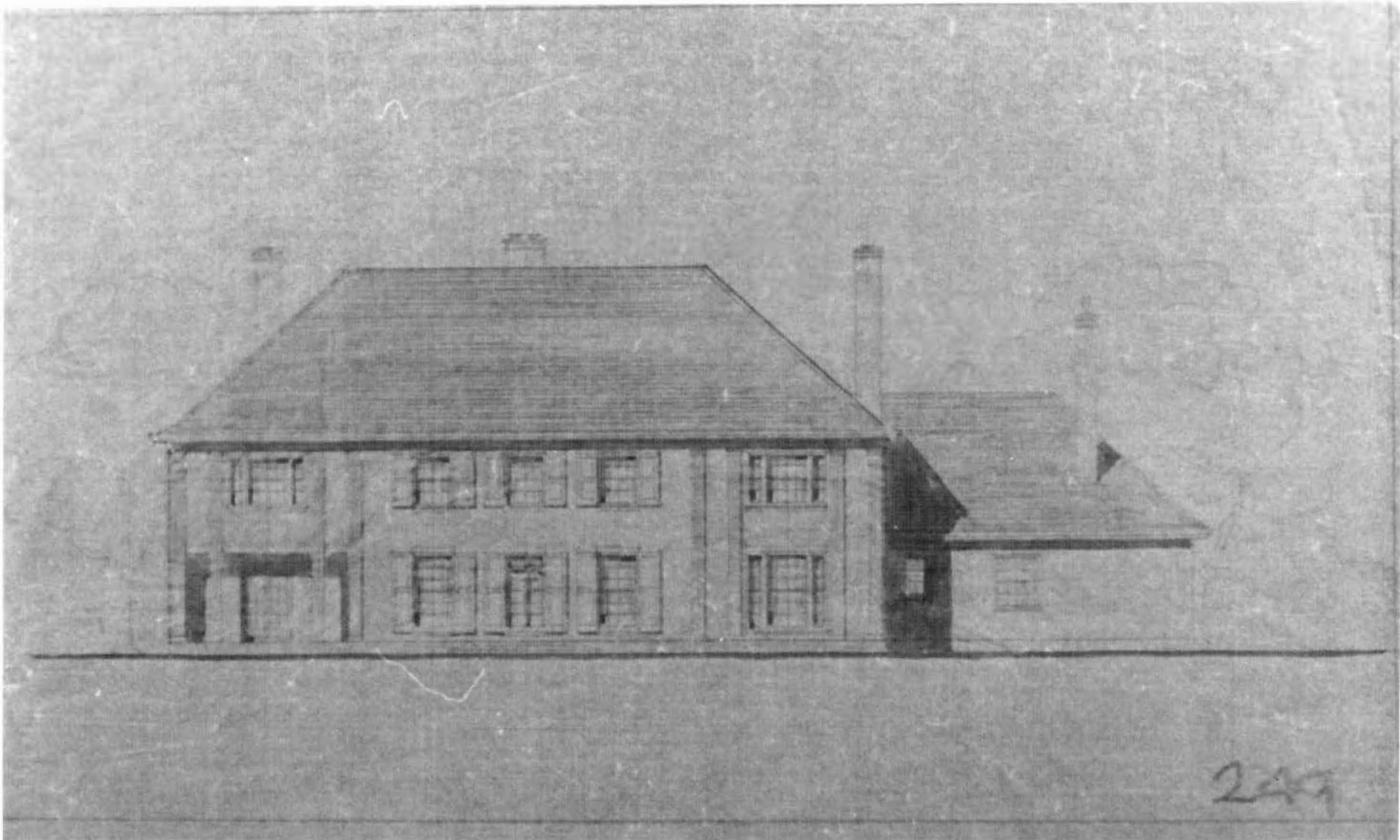


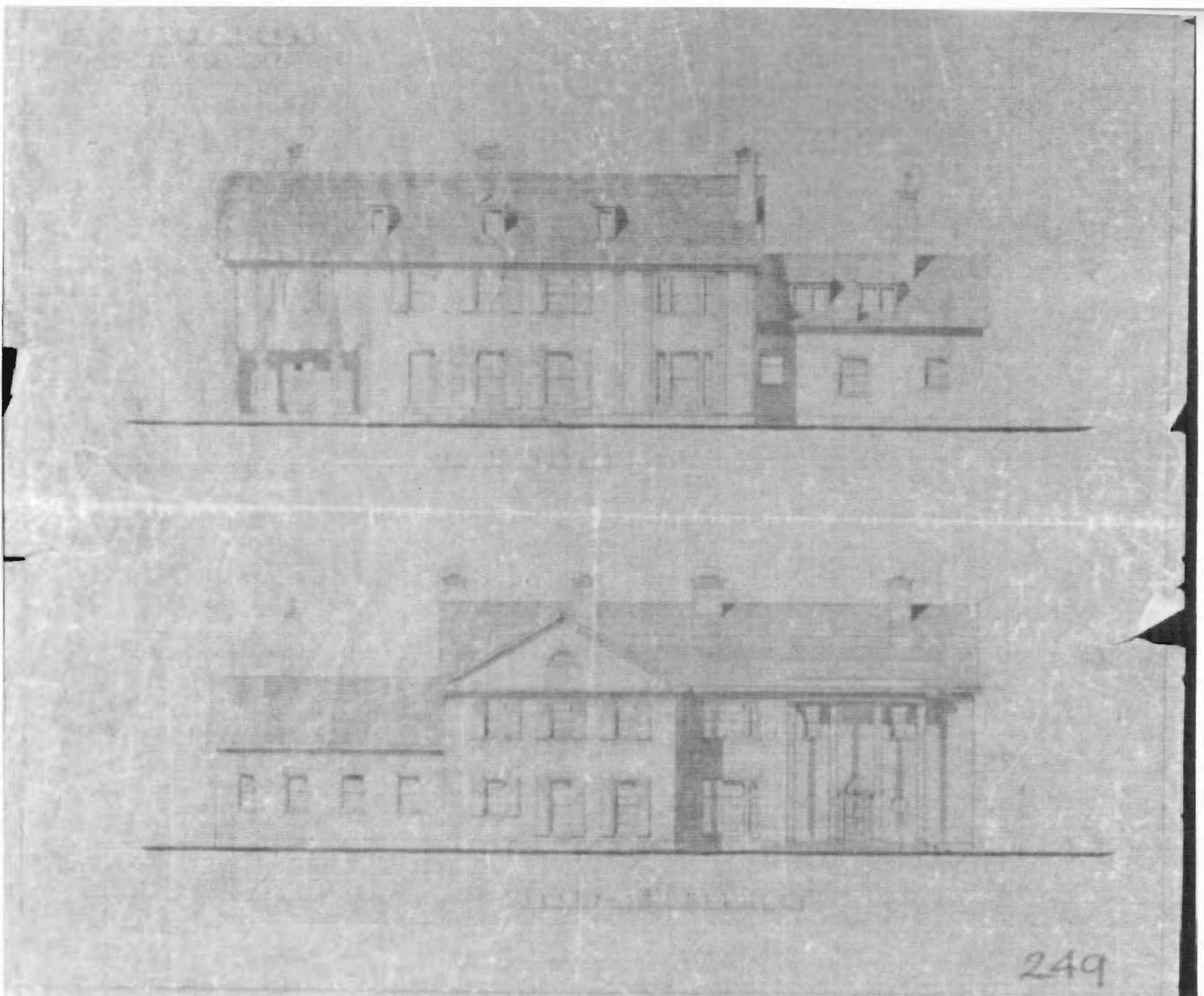
DURHAM COURT

HELMORE & COTTERILL, ARCHT.  
ARCHITECTS  
CHESTER



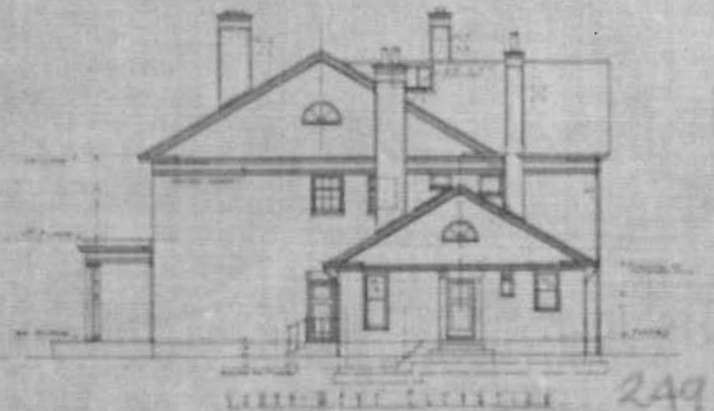
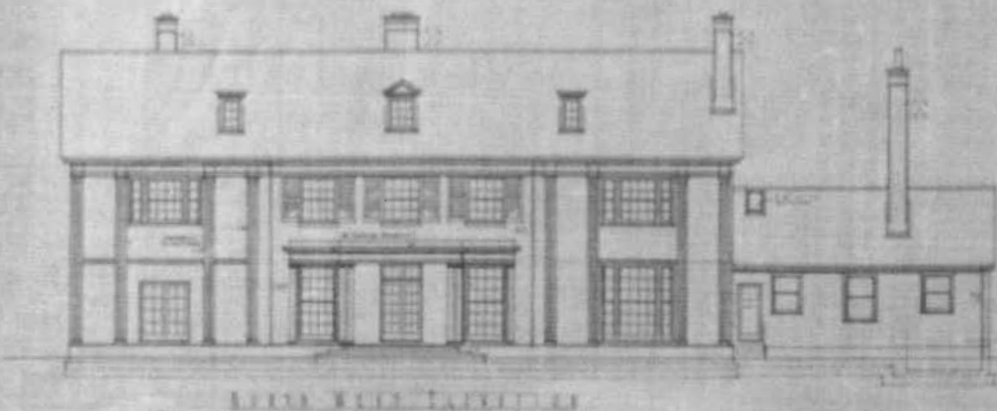
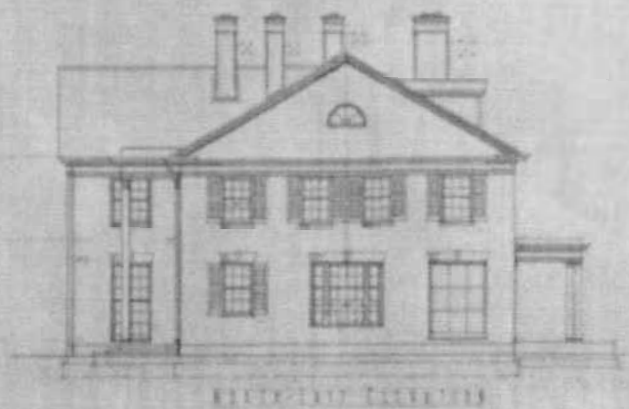
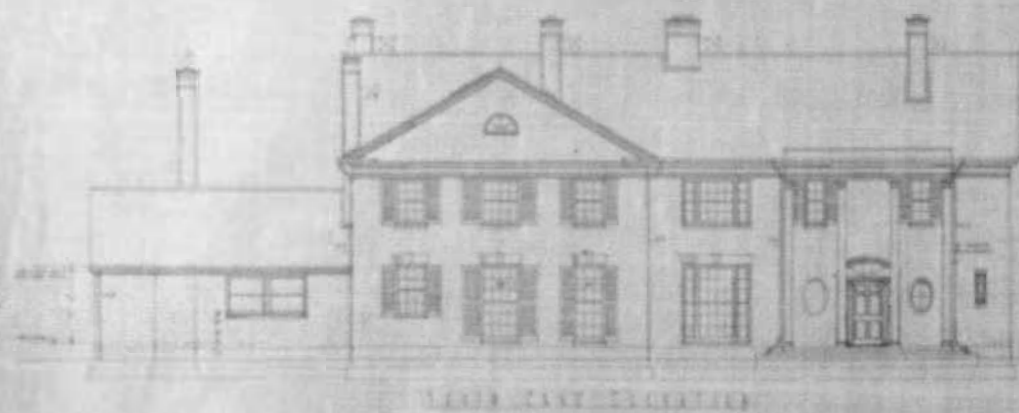
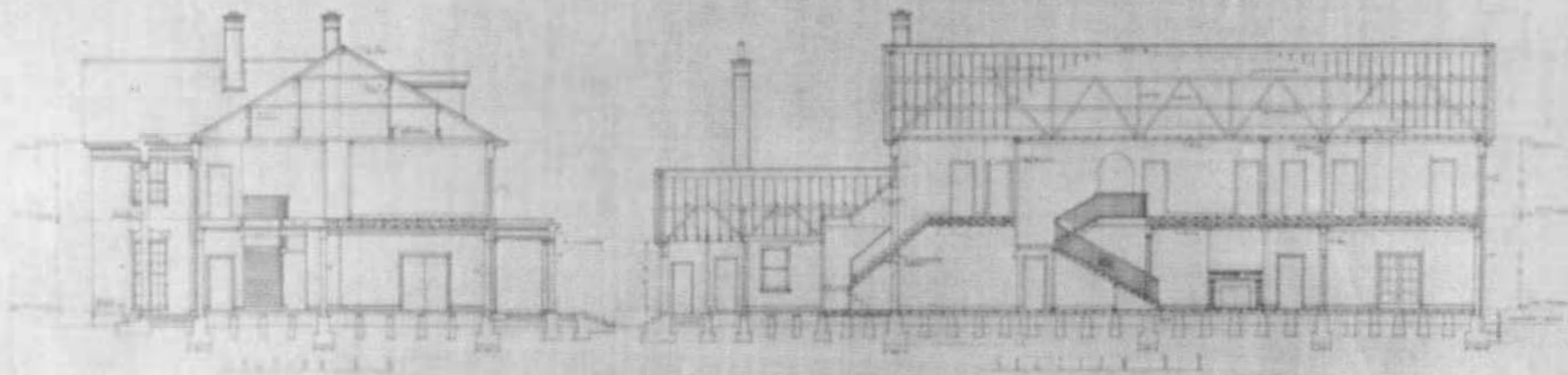






249



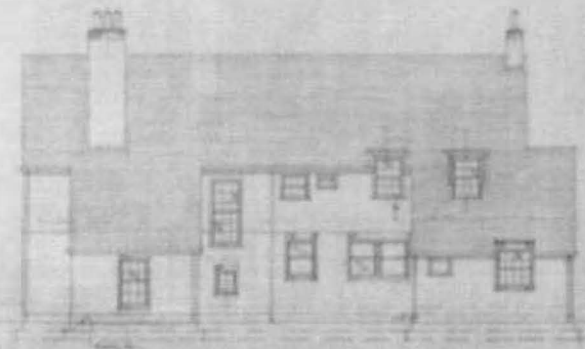




FRONT ELEVATION



SIDE ELEVATION



REAR ELEVATION

HOMESTEAD - LONG BEACH - ASHBURTON  
FOR J. H. GRIGG ESQ.

SCALE 8 FT. TO THE INCH



FRONT ELEVATION



SIDE ELEVATION

249











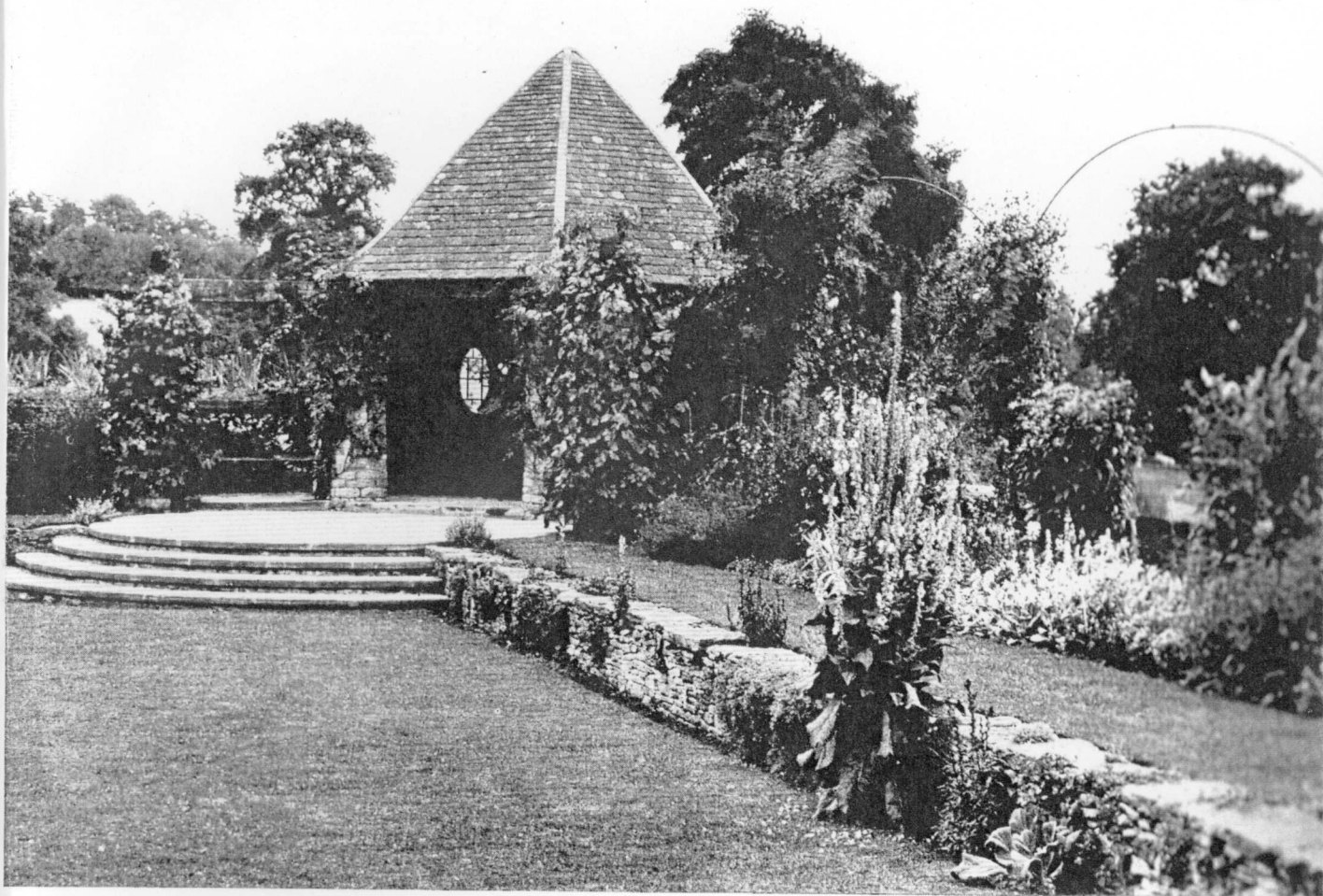












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104